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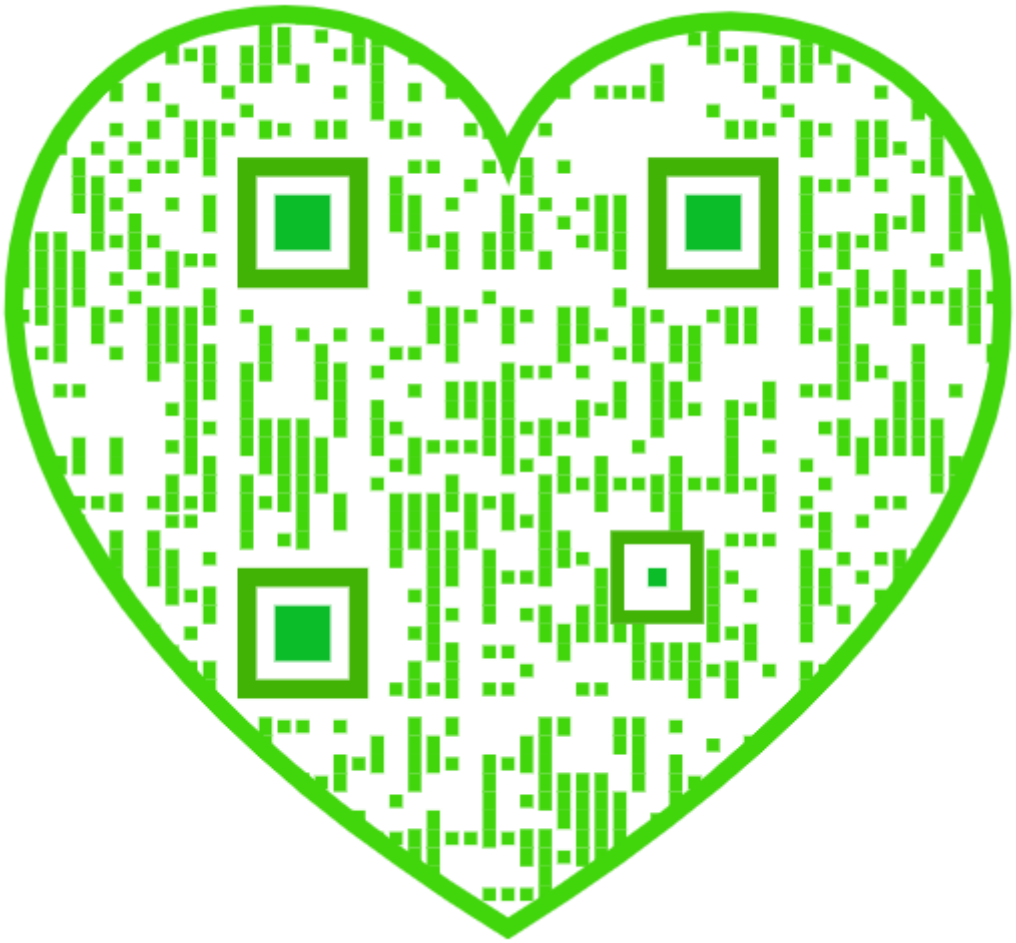
PORTRAITS AND PORTRAIT PAINTING

ESTELLE M. HURLL



Louvre, Paris] [Leonardo da Vinci

PORTRAIT OF MONA LISA

(*See page* 30)

Portraits and Portrait Painting

Being a Brief Survey of Portrait Painting from the Middle Ages to the Present Day

BY

Estelle M. Hurll

AUTHOR OF "THE MADONNA IN ART," "CHILD LIFE IN ART," "THE BIBLE BEAUTIFUL," ETC.

Illustrated

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Preface

THE purpose of this book is so plain as to need no explanation: it is a brief survey of portrait painting from the Middle Ages to the present day, showing what has been contributed to the art by each age and by each nationality, as well as by the several most notable portrait painters. Something, too, is told of the people who were the subjects of famous portraits. Among the illustrations the reader will find some familiar favourites, and also some interesting pictures which have never before been reproduced.

ESTELLE M. HURLL.

NEW BEDFORD, MASS.
July, 1907

INTRODUCTORY

ABOUT PORTRAIT PAINTING

THERE are, no doubt, a great many people who do not care for portraits, even people who are otherwise fond of pictures. What we call a good story picture is always sure to be popular, but it requires some effort to become interested in a portrait: it does not appeal so directly to the imagination. There is, indeed, much the same difference between a portrait and a story picture, that there is between a biography and a novel. One has to do chiefly with character, and the other with action. The biography is popularly regarded as dull reading, while the novel has wide circulation. Now and again, however, a biography is written, so full of dramatic incident and so skilfully related, that it compels an interest beyond the most fascinating novel. So, too, here and there, a portrait has been painted in so masterly a way

that it tells a story more interesting than an actual illustration — the story of an individual life. If we know who the sitter was, and something of his life, so much the better. But even the portrait of an "unknown" may be so charged with meaning that it will exercise a complete fascination for us. The great portrait master writes the story so plainly in the face that the picture needs no label. So Titian's Man with the Glove, Rembrandt's nameless gentleman of the Metropolitan Museum, Velasquez's Lady with the Fan, appeal to us more powerfully than many of the identified portraits by the same masters.

The first quality of great portraiture, then, is the power to reveal the inner character, or story, of the sitter. It is said that every man habitually wears a mask in the presence of his fellows, and it is only in moments of unconsciousness that he drops it. The great portrait painter must be able to discern and seize the true self, revealed in instantaneous flashes, and then veiled. Such an artist,

"Poring on a face,
Divinely through all hindrance finds the man
Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
The shape and colour of a mind and life,
Lives for his children, ever at his best." [1]

Interpretative portrait painting first found striking exemplification in Leonardo da Vinci, and reached a superlative degree in the Venetian Lotto. Probably every portrait painter since, however far from attaining his ideal, has set himself more or less definitely to this aim. To attain it requires something of the seer as well as the artist, and a sensitive and sympathetic nature as well. A painter's gift in interpreting life is great in proportion to the scope of his sympathies. Whistler's power was remarkable in his own circle, but his radius was short, while Hals and Velasquez were men of universal sympathies. Often the personality of the sitter is revealed by his direct gaze which seems to take us into his confidence. Smiling or grave, his eyes seem to draw us with a sense of "intimacy" which is difficult to define. We get this qual-

[1] The lines in Elaine in which Tennyson embodied the ideas expressed to him by Watts on the work of a portrait painter.

ity in the jovial camaraderie of Hals, the friendly smile of Reynolds, the wistful stare of Rembrandt, and the melancholy appeal of Morone. At other times the sitter's glance is averted, and he is quite unaware of observation. We have surprised him with his expression off guard, in the intimacy of his own self-communion. So Titian often treated his portrait subjects.

Obviously the noblest form of character revelation is idealization. When the painter can show what a man's soul is capable of attaining, he fulfils the highest function of his art. This was the special glory of Titian and Van Dyck, and not infrequently Reynolds and Gainsborough touched this mark. In our day no one has done so much in this way as George Frederick Watts.

Combined with psychological insight is a second equally important quality of the portrait painter, the power to give lifelikeness to a sitter. In the great portrait the blood seems fairly coursing through the veins. We seem to be looking at a breathing human being, not a picture; we have the sense of a

real presence. This is what we call vitality. It has to do with the physical, as the other has to do with the psychical. Vitality does not, however, require motion or even excessive animation. In the early military groups by Frans Hals the figures are so alive that they almost walk out of their frames. The quality is not sufficiently restrained; the sitters do not properly keep their place. It is possible to produce an effect of perfect lifelikeness in repose, as Velasquez did in his incomparable portraits of Philip IV.

To what degree the likeness should be counted an essential of portrait painting is a matter of varying opinion. As the original purpose of portraiture, in fact, the *raison d'être,* it has always been an ostensible, if not a real object of the painter. In the beginnings of the art there was so little skill that the sitter and his friends were easily satisfied. It was half the battle to copy the costume accurately. If the leading peculiarities of the features were suggested, the resemblance was considered a marvel. With the advancement of technique a more photographic accuracy

was expected, such as we have in Ghirlandajo and the Van Eycks. It was a still later development of the art to adapt the portrait to purely artistic ends, to make it first of all a picture. This was the primary aim of the Venetians, with whom decorative ensemble was of supreme interest. With such a point of view the resemblance was often neglected. As a critic has wittily remarked, "Titian, Rembrandt and Rubens often executed a fantasia on the motif of the person painted. . . . It was in the cause of beauty that these great artists sacrificed the accurate map of the features that pleases family friends, and the profusion of hard accessories that minister to family pride."

In the reproduction of facial topography the schools of Northern Europe excelled. The minute realism of the fifteenth century Flemings was carried over into the German portraiture of the next century, as exemplified in Dürer and Holbein. In the Dutch school of the seventeenth century this tendency reached the climax, Rembrandt making the only notable exception to the rule. Velasquez

had a way of his own in securing the likeness, not by the minute imitation of detail, but by a perfect reproduction of the total impression.

In a general way, usually somewhat loosely, portrait painters are distinguished as subjective or objective, according as they put most of themselves or their sitters into the picture. If the subjective element is something to be desired, the painter is the more eagerly sought after, especially by those conscious of their own lack. It is as if he had a princely gift to bestow. Nobility and distinction were conferred by Titian and Van Dyck; grace and charm by the French and English schools of the eighteenth century. On the other hand, men like Holbein, Frans Hals, and Velasquez, utterly lost themselves in their subjects, giving themselves up wholly to their impressions. Their work stood outside themselves, as if they had merely held the brush for an external motive force to wield.

In the history of portraiture it is curious to notice that what was one man's limitation was another's opportunity. With Van Dyck and Nattier the constant reiteration of the

same subject, or class of subjects, became mechanical. They were content to repeat themselves to the point of mannerism, and lost the ambition to grow. Velasquez and Rembrandt found a single model an inexhaustible field of study. A liftime was not long enough for them to devote to the multitudinous variations which one figure could suggest.

Again it is curious that while some men were distinctly the product of their time, others seemed born out of due season. Titian came at the climax of Venetian art, to epitomize the best of its characteristic qualities. Velasquez came two hundred years ahead of time, and struck out lines which his predecessors never dreamed of. The environment of Titian and Holbein, of Rubens and Van Dyck, shaped in a measure the character of their work, but other painters seemed to have no relation to their surroundings. It was matter-of-fact Holland which produced the most visionary of painters, Rembrandt; and Spain, the land of romantic adventure, brought forth the most naturalistic, Velasquez.

So through the whole range of great portrait painting, we find many temperaments, and many types of work. No single painter united in himself all the qualities of greatness, but all are needed to show the perfect ideal of the art which is as many sided as human nature itself.

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PORTRAITS AND PORTRAIT PAINTING

CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PORTRAIT PAINTING IN ITALY

IT is impossible to put one's finger upon a definite date for the origin of portrait painting, or upon any single work as the first example of that art. Portraiture is but one of many branches of the great mother art of painting, and was a long time in reaching any independent status. The original purposes of painting, it must be remembered, were distinctly religious. It was solely for the glory of God, and the edification of the faithful, that the first Christian artists painted their crude pictures on the damp walls of the catacombs. Bible story

and sacred allegory were the chosen subjects. It was not till the next stage of art history that something like a portrait element appears. Now we have the oft repeated figures of the apostles Peter and Paul, so strongly characterized that they seem to have been derived from some actual likeness. St. Chrysostom, indeed, alludes to a portrait of St. Paul, hanging in his chamber, and this was in the fourth century. In the wonderful old mosaics of S. Vitale, Ravenna, are the full length portraits of the contemporary Emperor Justinian, and the Empress Theodora, engaged in the ceremony of dedicating the church. The emperor is accompanied by the Archbishop Maximian, and many court attendants. Stiff and formal enough are these groups of splendid creatures, not very much like the originals, we may suppose, and executed in the style borrowed from the Byzantine art. We must wait a little longer for portrait beginnings of a more modern spirit.

As we pass out of the middle ages into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, we come to the so-called founders of modern painting.

From Florence and Siena came forth a great company of painters who covered the walls of churches and public buildings with vast schemes of mural decoration. The subjects were still largely religious and allegorical, and art, under the surveillance of church or state, was slow to introduce any innovations. Yet the opportunities for portraiture gradually increased. Quite an ambitious attempt in this direction is seen at Siena, in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's great allegorical decoration of the Palazzo Pubblico. The subject is Good and Bad Government, and in the lower portion of the composition is a long procession of Sienese dignitaries illustrating the results of the former.

Religious subjects had likewise their portrait opportunities. Occasionally some bold spirit ventured to introduce among the sacred personages of his composition a portrait figure of a contemporary. A pretty compliment this, to a patron, or famous personage of the day, as when the old painter in the Campo Santo (Pisa) introduces the Ghibelline commander Uberti in scenes in the life of Job.

Dante, appearing among the blessed spirits in the Paradise of the Bargello fresco (Florence), and Cimabue, Gaddi, and Memmi, among the participants in the Church Militant — that famous fresco of the Spanish Chapel, Florence — are among our most precious legacies from this period.

Nor were single portraits by this time altogether unheard of. Writers of that age, or a little later, allude to portraits of Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch, and Petrarch himself makes a great ado over Simone Memmi's portrait of Laura. These treasures have not come down to us, but we need not mourn them. The poet's sonnets on the likeness of his love would be sadly discounted by any such counterfeit presentments as fourteenth century art could produce. The best the painter could do at this stage was to reproduce some peculiarity of costume, or the manner of wearing the hair or beard. He knew nothing of characterization as we now understand it. The face was almost always drawn in profile, and, like the eighteenth century silhouette, suggested the likeness by the outline of fea-

tures, rather than by anything approaching expression. The nose and chin were the marks of identification, and there was a singular sameness even in the types of nose and chin. The Sienese citizens seem to have been cast in the same mould, with almond eyes, straight noses, expressionless mouths and pointed chins.

In short, the fourteenth century Italian portrait was painted like another form of the medal which came into vogue in the same period — a revival of the ancient art so esteemed in imperial Rome. Pisanello, the greatest of the medallists, was born in 1380, and worked early in the fifteenth century in the employ of the Duke of Ferrara. His portrait of Leonello d'Este shows the fine modelling characteristic of the medallist's art.

Side by side with the medallist's art was developed the art of the portrait bust which reached such perfection in the mid fifteenth century. Sculpture had in Italy, as in ancient Greece, outrun the art of painting, and in no way more strikingly than in portraiture.

Such works as Mino's bust of Bishop Salutati, and Benedetto da Majano's Pietro Mellini, uncompromisingly realistic, and consummately executed, had no contemporary match in portrait painting. But while the actual perfection of portrait painting was delayed till the sixteenth century, the evolution of the art in the preceding period is of immense interest.

The fifteenth-century Italian painting is seen in its most characteristic form in the great religious mural decorations which converted the walls of the churches into mammoth picture books. To this work all the painters of the period devoted themselves: Masaccio, Benozzo Gozzoli, the two Lippi, Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, Fra Angelico, Signorelli, Cosimo Roselli, Perugino, and Pinturicchio, and the others of the splendid roll-call of the Quattro Cento. Following the methods first timidly adopted in the preceding century, they one and all drew largely from their friends, neighbours and patrons as models for the figures in their sacred compositions. Thus the fifteenth century Italian

frescoes are a veritable historical portrait gallery.

It was a common practice of painters to sign their works with an auto portrait, so to speak. In this way we get our most interesting portraits of Masaccio, with square head and thick neck, of Botticelli, with waving hair and full curved lips, of Filippo Lippi, the portly tonsured friar, of Ghirlandajo, rather square and stolid, of Gentile da Fabriano, smooth faced and bland, of Perugino, with thin compressed lips, of honest, open-faced Benozzo Gozzoli, and of Signorelli and Fra Angelico, standing gravely together in the corner of the Orvieto fresco.

On the threshold of the century stood the Florentine Masaccio, whose frescoes were a school of draughtsmanship for his successors. Like the mosaicist of S. Vitale, Masaccio painted the ceremony of consecrating the Carmine church, with portraits of the participants. There were the artists, Brunellesco, Donatello, and Masolino, the ambassador Lorenzo Ridolfi, and other notable Florentine gentlemen, of whom Vasari tells us. The

wonder of wonders was that the painter had the "forethought to make these men not all of one size, but differing as in life; insomuch that one distinguishes the short and stout man from the tall and slender." It was a decided step forward to notice that all men were not made alike. The men who came after, now grew steadily in power to reproduce nature. Portrait figures were drawn with distinct characterization, and contemporary dignitaries were preserved for the infinite delight of posterity.

To begin with that great and powerful family which so long shaped the destinies of Florence — the Medici. It is Benozzo Gozzoli who presents us to the family in three generations: Cosimo, the "father of his country," Piero, the weak, and Lorenzo the Magnificent, moving in the procession of oriental kings who bring their offerings to the Christ-child. The walls of the little Riccardi chapel seem to stretch into an illimitable distance filled with the splendid pageant winding its way among the hills: gaily caparisoned horses, huntsmen and their dogs, serv-

Detail of Fresco, Riccardi Palace, Florence] [Benozzo Gozzoli

PORTRAIT OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI

ants, pages and retainers of every degree (Benozzo himself among them) accompanying the royal guests. Young Lorenzo, with richly embroidered doublet and cape, and a coroneted cap, sits his horse with serene dignity, the bright particular star of the occasion.

Again do the Medici family figure in the subject of the Adoration in Botticelli's picture of the Uffizi. In this case it is Cosimo, then just deceased, who impersonates the eldest of the Magian kings. But even his bared head and kneeling posture do not belie the air of haughty patronage with which he holds the Christ-child's foot. Patron of artists, founder of libraries, builder of hospitals and churches, this powerful tyrant blessed his people with one hand while he coerced them with the other. His strong personality was felt throughout Europe. His grandsons, Giovanni and Giuliano, stand waiting their turn, as the other kings, bearing themselves with the distinction of their race. Giuliano is the subject of a separate portrait by Botticelli, presenting the striking personality of

the man. The long, thin, slanting nose and lifted chin give him an air of supercilious disdain (Berlin gallery). Botticelli's well-known "Medallist" of the Uffizi is supposed to be Piero, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, holding in his hands a medallion portrait of his great grandfather Cosimo, pater patriae. The long and narrow face, almost gaunt with its high cheek bones, has an expression of interesting melancholy which we suspect belonged to the artist himself more than to the subject. It is one of the rare portraits in three quarters front face beginning in this time to replace the more common profile portraits. A full front face, still rarer, is presented in Botticelli's portrait of a youth in the National Gallery.

Two famous Florentine beauties were also among the portrait subjects of Botticelli's work for the Medici. One of these was Simonetta, the wife of Marco Vespucci, the lady raised to the pedestal of a divinity in the romantic imagination of Giuliano. For her amusement her admirer held a splendid tournament (1475) in the piazza of Santa Croce,

National Gallery, London] [Botticelli

PORTRAIT OF UNKNOWN YOUTH

to her praise he wrote laudatory verses, and in her name performed many gallant deeds. Three portraits are claimed as the likeness of this paragon, but they are not only quite dissimilar but quite unlike our preconceived notions of the original. The Simonetta of the Pitti is grave and prim, with an inordinately long neck, and a Quaker-like severity of dress. The subject of the Berlin gallery is a veritable lady of vanity, with fancifully decked hair and pretty but empty face. At Simonetta's death in 1476, all the learned Florentines were inconsolable. Sonnets were written in her memory by Lorenzo himself, there was an epigram by the famous Poliziano, and an elegy by Bernardo Pulci. Botticelli's other Florentine beauty is Lucrezia Tornabuoni, daughter of a rich and illustrious Florentine house, wife of the elder Piero, and mother of Simonetta's admirer Giuliano. She is described as a woman of great intellectual force and wide culture, a poet as well, and possessed of all the virtues. If the Frankfort Botticelli be really her portrait she was assuredly a charming creature in her youth,

with straight, fine brows and cameo-like profile.[1]

The impress of his own individuality is on all Botticelli's portrait work. His contemporary Ghirlandajo was more objective, being a close observer, and sticking conscientiously to facts. There was not so much poetry in his art, but it has solid and valuable qualities. He had a passion for portraiture, and there is a tradition that in his youthful days in the goldsmith's shop, he drew the likeness of every passer-by. His great frescoes are filled with the notable Florentines of his day: Lorenzo de' Medici, the Magnificent, most illustrious representative of his family; Francesco Sassetti, for whom he decorated a chapel at S. Trinità; men of learning like Ficino, Landino, and Poliziano; reigning belles, like Giovanna degli Albizzi; and even the navigator, Amerigo Vespucci. Nor did he omit himself; Baldovinetti, his master; Bastiano, his cousin; and David, his brother. But

[1] With these portraits of La Simonetta and Lucrezia should be classed the charming profile of the Florentine girl in the Poldi Pezzoli, Milan, attributed to Verocchio. This face is enchantingly demure and piquant.

it was the rich and illustrious Tornabuoni family in whose service his portrait skill was most lavishly expended. For them he decorated the choir of S. Maria Novella with illustrations of the life of the Virgin on one side, and the life of St. John Baptist on the other. To these sacred scenes the Tornabuoni lend their pompous presence. They form a solid phalanx awaiting the priest Zacharias as he tarries in the temple with the vision. Some of them stand by while the old man writes on a tablet the name of his new-born son, and others witness Joachim's expulsion from the temple. Their women folk come to visit both mothers, Anna and Elizabeth, to see the new-born babes. All these figures are convincing as portraits, if not really interesting. Ruskin says amusingly of them, "If you are a nice person, they are not nice enough for you, and if a vulgar person, not vulgar enough." In short, they are hopelessly mediocre.

In Rome as well as in Florence Ghirlandajo plied his art, and the Call of the Apostles, in the Sistine chapel, is one of his noblest compositions. Here again are rows of inter-

esting portrait figures standing as spectators of the sacred scene. This was painted in 1482 when the side walls of the chapel were being decorated under the superintendence of Botticelli. All the panels are full of portraits in what was now the prevailing custom. Perugino's Charge to Peter and the Baptism, Botticelli's Temptation and scenes from the life of Moses, and Pinturicchio's Journey from Midian, abound in character studies of a most interesting quality.

Most of these painters made an occasional separate portrait study. One by Ghirlandajo of special charm is the Old Man and Child of the Louvre. The realistic painter spares us nothing in delineating the warts which disfigure the poor old face, but with a touch of real genius he reveals the transfiguring power of love, as the grandfather gazes into the wistful little face lifted to his. Again, Perugino's portrait of Francesco delle Opere, in the Uffizi, has been pronounced "one of the most ably interpreted, most firmly characterized, most convincing faces, in the whole range of Renaissance art." This certainly is

Private Collection] [Ghirlandajo

PORTRAIT OF GIOVANNA TORNABUONI

extraordinary achievement for a man who was content to repeat as if by stencil the same type of face for Madonna, saint and angel. Pinturicchio's Boy, in the Dresden gallery, is a charming portrait, with his fresh ingenuous face, and the severe simplicity of the pose.

Our study of fifteenth century portrait painting would be incomplete without noting how much the progress of the art was furthered by the patronage of rich noblemen throughout Italy. Duke Federigo of Urbino was an intelligent and progressive man of this type. Among the artists in his employ was Pietro della Francesca, whose portraits of his patron and his good wife, Battista Sforza, are now in the Uffizi gallery. The faces are drawn in sharp profile, with firmness and precision. Federigo's strong features lend themselves admirably to the treatment, and the deep indentation above his large nose identifies him unmistakably. Battista, undeniably bourgeoise, regards her lord and master complacently. A worthy pair whom the artist's gift has preserved as an example of domestic contentment. The duke is also seen in the

rôle of donor in a large altar-piece of the Madonna and Saints. He kneels in full armour in the foreground, his helmet on the pavement, his hands reverently clasped. This work is in the Brera, at Milan, and it is thought that Carnevale may have had a hand in it, though it appears to have come from Pietro's workshop. Another important portrait by Pietro della Francesca is that of Malatesta of Rimini, in a fresco in the church of S. Francesco, in that town. The stern despot kneels before his patron S. Sigismund, and the portrait is executed with the simplicity, dignity and force which give character to the work of this remarkable painter.

Among other commissions Pietro worked at Ferrara for the Duke Borso d'Este in the decoration of the Schifanoia Palace, but no traces of his handiwork are now to be found there. What remains to us of the original scheme of decoration is the joint product of Cosimo Tura and Francesco del Cossa, with their pupils. Cosimo Tura was court painter for two dukes of Ferrara, from 1458 to his death in 1495. The duties of such a post were

manifold, from the designing of furniture and the management of pageants, to covering the palace walls with paintings and turning out portraits on demand. The lasting monument of Tura's ceaseless activity is the series of compositions showing the Duke Borso in various episodes of his career, riding to the hunt, receiving a messenger from Bologna and exchanging courtesies with the ambassador of Venice. It is all a most interesting picture pageant with the portrait figure of the duke moving through the scenes.

Of the innumerable detached portraits which Tura must have made, not one remains to us. Little value seems to have been attached to such work, which was often done under pressure, and perhaps not very creditably, to serve some temporary purpose. The fortunate nobleman of this period who could command a court painter, regarded a portrait almost as we do a photograph. It was not kept as a piece of decoration for one's house, but was sent to some absent friend or relative, a suitor, or a husband at the wars.

The court of Mantua enjoyed a practical

monopoly of the great painter Mantegna, from his appointment in 1459 to his death early in the next century. There is a list of a dozen lost portraits belonging to this time against two which remain. One of the latter represents the seventeen-year-old son of the Gonzaga house, Francesco, just made a cardinal (Naples). The other portrait subject is the Cardinal Mezzarata (Berlin), a remarkable man who was successively physician, soldier and priest, and whose luxurious living won him the soubriquet of "Lucullus." In both works Mantegna showed himself a psychologist of extraordinary insight. The subjects are taken off guard, unconscious of observation, absorbed in their own thoughts, purely and entirely themselves. The young Francesco is done in profile, in the fashion of the primitives, the Cardinal Mezzarata, in the rare three-quarters view, which shows the strong lines of his hard face, the mouth of the iron will, and the keen eyes of self seeking under the heavy beetling brows. There is a plastic quality in the modelling which allies it to the portrait busts of the same period.

Mantegna was not altogether free from the limitations of his day, but his insight into character was a distinct advance in the art of portrait painting.

Another new thing which Mantegna introduced was a portrait family group. The Marchese Lodovico had commissioned him to decorate the walls of a room (Camera degli Sposi) in the Castello with scenes of a domestic character. On one side the painter represented the patron and his wife, the Marchesa Barbara, surrounded by children and relatives in a typical family scene. The composition anticipated by two hundred years a Dutch fashion of the seventeenth century. Another subject in the room was the Meeting of Lodovico with the Cardinal Francesco, representing an actual episode, as was not an uncommon practice at the time.

It was some years later, after the death of Lodovico, that the succeeding Duke, Francesco, brought as his bride to Mantua the famous Isabella d'Este. Under the direction of this gifted and critical lady, the painter did other fine things to add to his fame. Un-

happily, we have no more portraits from his hand, having lost what would have been an inestimable treasure to us — the likeness of Isabella, painted to send to the Countess d'Acerra. Of the Marchese Francesco, a man of unprepossessing appearance, we have Mantegna's portrait in the splendid Madonna of Victory, where he kneels as donor at the foot of the throne.

Another painter pressed into the service of the indefatigable Isabella, was Francia, the Bolognese. In the course of the Marchese Francesco's warlike adventures, he had been taken prisoner by the Venetians. The pope Julius II had intervened for his release, but by way of hostage his little boy Federigo was to be sent to Rome. The mother longed for a portrait of her son to console her in his absence, and Francia received an order to make one. This picture, after long being lost sight of, has recently been identified as a beautiful little work owned by an English gentleman who has allowed it to be photographed. The little fellow is as pretty and romantic looking as a mother could wish. Of

Isabella herself, Francia also painted a portrait which has unhappily been lost.

Evangelista Scappi, and Bartolommeo Bianchi, were others of Francia's identified sitters, men well known in their day, and admirably preserved for posterity by Francia's work. In the Pitti are two portraits of unknown men attributed to Francia, and again one especially interesting is in the Lichtenstein gallery at Vienna. All these show certain common mannerisms. The hair is massed in two evenly divided locks which conceal the ears, the mouth drawn in an exact Cupid's bow, the face smoothed out of expression, the hands without articulation, and the finish as careful as goldsmith's work. Francia appears to have been a leader in the movement towards popularizing portrait painting. Many of his sitters were middle class people. The art was no longer to remain in the possession of the privileged few. The character of the painter's work was, however, less progressive than his spirit. He was modern in giving his sitters a full front face, but primitive in craftsmanship. So while the span of his life

extended some years into the new century, his place is still in the old.

The decorations of the Camera degli Sposi at Mantua, and the Schifanoia Palace in Ferrara, were not the only historical portrait compositions of the period. Another example is the work of Melozzo da Forlì for the library of the pope Sixtus IV. The subject was the pope conferring the charge of his library upon Platina, in the presence of various dignitaries. We have here strong and well characterized portraits of Sixtus IV, of Platina, of Giuliano della Rovere (afterwards pope Julius II), and of Pietro Riario (afterwards Bishop of Treviso). The fresco was eventually transferred to canvas and now hangs in the Vatican gallery.

One of the most brilliant courts of the fifteenth century was that of Lodovico Sforza, Il Moro, at Milan. He drew to his employ the greatest painter of the age, Leonardo da Vinci. So varied were the demands upon the painter during the sixteen years of his service, from decorating a ball room to directing an irrigating canal, and modelling an equestrian

Ambrosiana, Milan] [Ambrogio de Predis

PORTRAIT OF BIANCA SFORZA (?)

statue, that his portrait works were few and far between. It is on record that he painted likenesses of both Lodovico's mistresses, Cecilia Gallerani, and Lucrezia Crivelli, but these are lost. The former was so much admired by Isabella d'Este that she borrowed it to compare with Bellini's work. It seems pretty certain that the great Florentine did not paint any panel portraits of the duke himself, or his charming young wife, Beatrice d'Este. The portraits which he made on the wall of S. Maria della Grazie, opposite the Last Supper, have long since perished.

Another painter in Lodovico's employ was Ambrogio de Predis, whose work shows so plainly the influence of Leonardo that some of it has been taken for the elder master's. There is a pair of portraits in the Ambrosiana, at Milan, attributed by recent critics to his hand, and most plausibly regarded as Lodovico's daughter, Bianca Sforza, and her husband, Giangaleazzo di San Severino. The delicately cut profile, the netted head-dress edged with pearls, the jewelled fillet and the pearl necklace, are parts of the quaint charm

of the lady. The handsome young man with thoughtful eyes and bushy, curling hair has the romantic air we associate with the gallant cavalier.

It seems a great pity that neither Ambrogio nor Leonardo left us portraits of the great duke and his girl wife. For authentic likenesses we must turn to Zenale's Madonna, painted in 1495 for the church of S. Ambrogio at Nemo, but now in the Brera gallery. Lodovico kneels at the Madonna's right, with his little boy, the Count of Pavia, beside him. Beatrice kneels *vis-à-vis,* with her baby Francesco. All the faces are in profile, stiff, wooden and expressionless, much more interesting for costume than for physiognomy. Comparing them with the beauty of the Madonna, and the excellence of the attendant saints, one realizes fully that with the average craftsman, such as Zenale, even at this late date, portraiture was still greatly behind ideal and devotional figure painting in Italy.

Ambrosiana, Milan] [Ambrogio de Predis

PORTRAIT OF GIANGALEAZZO SANSEVERINO (?)

CHAPTER II

ITALIAN PORTRAIT PAINTING IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

HISTORY seldom accommodates itself to chronology, but, by a curious coincidence, a portrait was begun in the year 1500, marking as by a milestone, the transition from the fifteenth to the sixteenth centuries. This was the famous Mona Lisa, by Leonardo da Vinci. One after another the steps had been taken to make a real portrait. Masaccio had distinguished the fat man from the thin, or, in other words, had given individuality to a figure. Ghirlandajo had faithfully reproduced the characteristic features. A few bolder spirits had turned the portrait head from profile to front face, adding a sense of intimacy to the likeness. The historical portrait composition had given animation and some expressiveness to pose and gesture.

Mantegna had made a beginning of character study, and had suggested the manner of man behind the facial mask. At length came Leonardo, and the portrait revealed a living soul.

Master of all the technical processes with which his predecessors had struggled, he had, besides, the analytical mind of the psychologist, and the imagination of the seer. The human face possessed an endless fascination for this singular genius. If he encountered on the street some interesting physiognomy, he would follow the person about all day, and, returning home at night, would draw the portrait from memory. One evening he gave a supper party, convulsing his guests with merriment by his amusing stories. Then he retired and drew the faces as he had observed them in the contortions of laughter. For caricature, too, he had a leaning, and made many drawings with exaggerated features and grimaces, as grotesque as gargoyles. The taste for the bizarre was but one phase of his love for the transient and subtle in expression. The fleeting loveliness of a woman's

smile was his obsession. He spent his life in the pursuit of this vanishing beauty. Sometimes the smile is pensive, sometimes, merely happy; sometimes it is enigmatic, sometimes purely mischievous; sometimes it is treacherous, sometimes alluring. Always it has the charm of momentariness.

The restless curiosity of Leonardo's genius drew him in so many directions, that he had neither time nor energy to accomplish large results in any. Sculpture and architecture, poetry and music, science, mathematics and engineering occupied him by turns. Though his fame rests upon painting, this art really filled but a small part of his life. The Mona Lisa is his only existing title to the name of portrait painter. There is no slightest doubt of its authenticity, while the several other so-called Leonardo portraits have all been questioned. Other portraits which he is known to have painted, mentioned in a previous chapter, have been lost. It is on the multitude of his drawings, collated with the Mona Lisa, that we base our knowledge of his portrait art. It was as easy for him to draw, as for most

men to talk. A pen, a pencil, the silver point, the crayon, was almost always at hand, to throw off an idea. As we gloat upon these precious sketches in the museums of Europe, or pore over the reproductions which modern publishers have made available, the wonder grows that one hand could have compassed such a range. Old age and infancy interest him alike; strong and muscular men, soft and beautiful women. In play of muscle, attitude, gesture and facial expression he is master. His special passion — after the smile — is for hair, the waving tresses of a woman, the disordered locks, or curling beard of a man. The dexterity with which he drew each separate hair was almost Flemish in minuteness.

One of the most interesting and charming of the portrait drawings is the sketch of Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua. As we have seen in a previous chapter her portraits by Mantegna and Francia are unhappily lost. More is known of this lady than of any of the grandes dames of the Italian Renaissance. Her wit and beauty, her learning and connoisseurship, and above

all her passion for art, made her a conspicuous figure in all the great courts. She gathered about her poets, painters and scholars, and her patronage was an immense stimulus to culture. Hers was decidedly a dominant personality. Of all this, however, Leonardo's sketch gives no inkling. The master surprised her in a mood of simple gaiety of heart. There is a piquancy and girlish charm in her smile, as remote as possible from any pose of the woman of affairs. This sketch was made in a short visit at Mantua, in the period of Leonardo's connection with the court of Milan. The promised portrait for which it was a beginning was never forthcoming, though Isabella was anxious to have it. Leonardo, it appears, did not regard the great lady with the awe she inspired in others.

Another interesting portrait sketch by Leonardo is the likeness of himself in his old age. His heavy overhanging eyebrows meet the hair which mingles with the beard in long flowing locks. The eyes peer out with the glance of the acute observer. The mouth, with upper lip shaven, is shut in a firm line

which is almost stern. There is something in the apostolic grandeur of the head which suggests the preacher's cry that "all is vanity."

The portrait of Mona Lisa was four years in the making, for Leonardo would paint only when the impulse moved him, and was never satisfied. The lady was the wife of a Florentine gentleman, Francesco del Giocondo, and was regarded as a great beauty. To secure the evanescent charm of her expression, some one was employed at each sitting to entertain her with music, or jest or story. Of the completed portrait, now hanging in the Louvre, more perhaps has been written than of any other picture in the world. Mona Lisa is a siren, attractive and repellent by turns, always fascinating, and always elusive. She is an image of the eternal feminine. The technical excellence of the work, the modelling of face and hands, the colour of the flesh, the moisture of eyes and lips, have elicited unending praise from Leonardo's day to our own.

Though the other portraits once attributed to Leonardo must now be regarded as the work of other hands, they are still his in char-

acter. It was his influence which made them what they are. Of these the Belle Ferroniere is the most closely akin to Mona Lisa in conception. The bust is set against a ground of solid colour, instead of against a landscape, as is usual with Leonardo, and the handling differs from his in colour and modelling. It is in the psychological insight that the portrait shows the master's leading — in the speaking eyes, and the expressive mouth. The " Nun " of the Pitti Gallery is posed like Mona Lisa, but here the resemblance ends. Her gentle timidity suggests perfectly the cloistered life. Since this picture was taken from Leonardo's list, it has been attributed by differing critics to Perugino, Francia-bigio, and Ridolfo Ghirlandajo. The " Goldsmith," in the same gallery, once assigned to Leonardo, is now given to Ridolfo Ghirlandajo. The young man holds in his hand a beautiful object of his craft, which he regards with a smile of satisfaction. This, too, whoever may be the artist, shows the new spirit of character study which came into Italy with Leonardo, and the new century.

Of Leonardo's followers, Andrea Solario is one whose few portraits show that he fell in readily with the new movement. The most remarkable is the Christoforo Longono, in the Louvre, represented in half-length and full front view; painted with no shirking of difficult problems, and with the assured touch of a craftsman. The partial closing of the eyes gives the introspective look of the sitter unaware of the observer. Charles of Amboise, also in the Louvre, has again the half-closed, sleepy eyes, imparting a meditative air which is enhanced by the droop of the head. These works show a curious kinship with the Flemish portraits of the same period.

Luini is doubtless the most conspicuous of the Leonardesque painters, but his tastes did not often incline him to portrait work. To him, however, we owe the noble piece of decoration which contains the Bentivoglio portraits. It is in the church of S. Maurizio, at Milan, covering the eastern wall. Alessandro and his wife Ippolita Sforza kneel with their patron saints, on opposite sides of the altar. They are grand and impressive figures, tak-

ing high rank among the portraits of donors in sacred art. Among Luini's Saronno frescoes, in the subject of the Disputation in the Temple, is a portrait figure said to represent the artist himself. It is an old man with long, white beard, turning his deeply seamed face towards the spectator with an almost wistful look. "La Columbina" is also supposed to be a portrait, but the subject is treated so fancifully that it is probably the idealization of a beautiful model. The smile with which the lady regards the flower comes certainly direct from Leonardo. It was he who taught painters how to crystallize a passing mood.

Even Raphael felt the influence of Leonardo's portrait work. Coming to Florence in 1504, when Mona Lisa was fresh from the painter's hands, the young Urbinate fell under the magic spell of her smile. Having an order for the portraits of Angelo and Maddelena Doni, he made bold to pose the lady precisely after the Mona Lisa manner. Two women could scarcely be farther apart than the placid Maddelena, and her fascinating prototype, but the portrait was an interesting

beginning of a new line of work. It was also during this visit in Florence that Raphael painted the portrait of himself, which gives us a charming image of the gentle imaginative youth on the threshold of his great career.

In the twelve years of Raphael's Roman period, demands multiplied upon him so fast that he had little time for portrait painting, even had his tastes inclined him in that direction, as they plainly did not. A brilliant figure at the papal court, the favourite of two popes, the friend and intimate of the richest and most influential officials and noblemen, handsome, amiable, and supremely gifted, his happy career reads like a fairy tale. The amount of work he accomplished was prodigious, but it lay chiefly in the direction of mural decorations and altar-pieces. His predilection seemed for purely ideal and imaginative composition. Certain portrait orders, however, he could not decline, when they came from his papal patrons, or his own intimates. In the end he produced a group of pictures which would be remarkable from any source. Coming from Raphael, they astonish us in

Pitti Gallery, Florence] [Raphael

PORTRAIT OF JULIUS II

showing the prince of idealists as a dispassionate realist.

The pope Julius II is the dominant personality among these portraits, as fiery in the papal chair as on the field of battle. "Why represent me with a book?" he had once said to Michelangelo, who was making his portrait bust, "Give me a sword." Age might enfeeble his body, but not the spirit. His mood is thoughtful, but he broods less upon the past than upon the future. Even while he rests, he is alert for action. The picture in the Uffizi is now generally regarded by critics as the original of the several paintings. It is curious that Michelangelo's bronze bust of Julius was melted in after years to make a cannon, while Raphael's portrait has proved a "monument more lasting than bronze." Still another portrait of the Pope by Raphael is the splendid figure introduced into the Chastisement of Heliodorus in the Vatican hall known by that name.

Julius II was a handsome old man; any artist would have liked such a sitter. But Leo X was fat and coarse and greasy; it

would seem that nothing could be made of such a subject, except by idealizing him out of all recognition. This was not Raphael's way. He was as unflattering as a Fleming in his veracity, and, like a Fleming, too, he painted the pope's gold embroidered satin cope, the illuminated breviary, and the richly engraved altar-bell with utmost care. His special triumph was in seizing upon an expression of refinement and thoughtfulness which redeems the face. The pope is seated at a table, with two cardinals, his nephew and cousin, standing in the shadow behind the corners of his chair, and properly subordinated to the principal figure. Such a group was quite unique at the time, and this fact with the fine scheme of colour, and the unusual attention to detail, give the picture pre-eminence among Raphael's works. Another portrait of the same pope was introduced by Raphael into the composition of the Rout of Attila, the companion fresco of the Chastisement of Heliodorus.

Among the important figures at the papal court in Raphael's time Cardinal Bibbiena

was very influential. He had in his youth been a protégé of Lorenzo the Magnificent, in Florence, and was a connoisseur in art and letters. He performed various good offices for Raphael, and finally arranged a marriage between the painter and his niece. Raphael's untimely death, however, defeated the plan, but he had in the meantime painted the portrait of the cardinal, which is now in the Madrid gallery. The thin face with pointed features has all the marks of culture and intellectuality. But the painter revealed more than he perhaps divined himself, of the cunning and ambition of the man. Bibbiena indeed finally proved too cunning, and, losing favour with Leo X, he met a mysterious death such as was gruesomely common in those days, attributed to poison.

Inghirami was another favourite of Lorenzo de' Medici, who had by learning and eloquence won a position as secretary of Julius II. Leo X was also his liberal patron, under whom he might have risen higher had he not died. There are two accredited portraits of Inghirami by Raphael, one in the

Pitti, Florence, and the other at Fenway Court, Boston. The secretary sits at a table, writing, and lifts his head as if for inspiration, with eyes rolled up in a seraphic manner, somewhat at variance with his stout heavy featured face.

Of all Raphael's later friends none was of greater service to him than the Mantuan poet, Baldassare Castiglione. It was not by worldly influence, or by great wealth, but by advice, criticism, suggestion, and inspiration, that this good man helped the artist forward in his career. In the midst of a corrupt and self-seeking generation, Castiglione was singularly high-minded and disinterested. In his many visits in Rome he was always warmly welcomed. In behalf of Isabella d'Este he entreated Raphael to paint some picture for the great lady, but the busy young artist never found time to fill the order. It is interesting to notice, however, that he introduced a portrait of Isabella's young son Federigo (Whom Francia had once so charmingly painted) [1] into the composition of the

[1] See page 20.

Louvre, Paris] [Raphael

PORTRAIT OF JOANNA OF ARAGON

School of Athens. Raphael's portrait of Castiglione is one of his most beautiful colour harmonies, as well as a character study of profound insight. In the open countenance, turned frankly to ours there is a genuineness which we should hardly imagine possible to a courtier. Yet the author of "Il Cortegiano" knew well all the intricacies of social life in the great world. It seems to have tact and real kindliness, rather than cunning or diplomacy, which made him a general favourite.

Our list of Raphael's Roman portraits must include at least two whose subjects were women. The regal pose and raiment of Joanna of Aragon belie the childish little face with the hair falling to the beautiful shoulders. There is little but doll-like prettiness in the lady herself, but the picture is charming in decorative quality. The Donna Velata is the beautiful model for the Sistine Madonna. Her face is of the perfect oval, loved of the painter. Though wearing the dress of the Roman matron, the painter could not resist the temptation to give a Madonna-like touch to the picture by throwing a veil over

her head. The eyes, set wide apart, have the peculiar far-sighted look which gives saintliness to the expression.

Upon Raphael's death in 1520 his followers strove to imitate him in religious and historical composition rather than in portrait work. Out of the vast output of Raphaelesque pictures of the next quarter century there are extremely few portraits. These few, it must be said, are far more creditable than the insipid dilutions of the master's religious motives.

In the meantime Florence continued to show a growing interest in portraiture. Pontormo stood at the head of this work in the middle of the century, and passed the leadership on to his pupil Bronzino, who lived fifteen years beyond him. Both men were liberally patronized by the Medici, and did for the later generation of this great house what Botticelli and his fellows had done for the elders. Pontormo took an important part in preparations for the triumphal procession in Florence which celebrated the accession of the Medici Pope Leo X. His portrait work

was conscientious and dignified, and not infrequently vigorous. In general there was not much fire or charm in it. How different is the young Ippolito Medici of his handiwork, heavy and ordinary, from the romantic youth of Titian's canvas. Much better than the Medici portraits is the picture of a sculptor in the Uffizi, where the artistic temperament is well indicated. There is also a profile portrait of a fine old man in the Pitti, quite out of the ordinary in interest.

The affection between Pontormo and his pupil Bronzino was proverbial in Florence. The older man introduced a charming figure of the youth in one of his cassone pictures, and the younger reciprocated by placing his master in a religious composition, Christ in Limbo. Bronzino first came into notice during the festivities in honour of the marriage of Duke Cosimo to Eleanor of Toledo. The duke was so delighted with some decorations executed in the palace that he gave orders for a chapel to be decorated. Then followed a series of all the family portraits: the duke and duchess and the several children, some of

them often repeated. A number of these are now in the Florentine galleries, interesting both as portrait and historical studies. Duke Cosimo himself illustrates the decadence of his house, in the bullet-shaped head, with close-cropped hair, and hard plebeian countenance. The refined tyranny of the ancestors has now become a coarse brutality. The Duchess Eleanor is described in Vasari's fulsome flattery as "a lady excellent above all that ever lived, and whose infinite merits render her worthy of eternal praise." In truth she seems an amiable and placid person, with her hair parted smoothly and decorously over her wide brow. She wears a brocade of huge pattern, and sits with conscious dignity. The little boy at her side (Fernando) is utterly charming. He has no princely finery, but looks as if called suddenly from the nursery in his pinafore, and, nestling against his mother, looks out with bright-eyed merriment at the caller. There is nothing so spontaneous in child portraiture up to this time. Don Garcia is equally a child, a fat little fellow, laughing outright as he holds a bird in his pudgy hand.

Uffizi Gallery, Florence] [Bronzino

PORTRAIT OF DON GARCIA

He wears a pretty satin tunic as a prince should, but is not at all concerned with his dignity. There is also a serious little girl of the family, not pretty, but sweet and wistful. Though one could multiply the list of portraits by Bronzino, whose number exceeded even the patience of Vasari in enumerating, we need go no farther to see that the new spirit in portrait painting has fully arrived, when the child has come into his own.

CHAPTER III

THE VENETIAN PORTRAIT SCHOOL: EARLY GROUP

WHEN we come to Venice, we begin our study of Italian portrait painting all over again. Everything about Venice is unique: the city, the history, the people and the art. The approach is by water ways, winding among the coloured marbles of palace fronts, with fairy bridges uniting one stately pile with another. Black keeled gondolas, with gleaming silver prows, glide over the canals, and the parti-coloured canvases of sailing craft move out into the open. The atmosphere is charged with colour, rich, variegated, harmonious, making the city a vast mosaic, like those filling the domes of the churches. Hither came the East and the West, the North and the South, to pour their diverse influences into the making

of a perfect whole. The spirit of the Orient predominated. From Constantinople came the great church domes, hanging bell-like against the sky; from Constantinople, more literally, the marble pillars and treasures of gold and silver and precious stones filling the churches with beauty. The Oriental love of luxury came in with the spoils: the passion for rich stuffs and jewels, for pomp and display, for festival and pageantry. With such qualities in the ascendancy, religious worship became a magnificent ceremonial, patriotism expressed itself in noble public monuments, while private ambition sought gratification in costly palaces and lavish entertainments. In joy and pride of life, Venice was the personification of a splendid egotism. It naturally followed that Venice was the proper field for the development of a portrait school. It was the first state in Italy to make provision for official portraits of her rulers, and the first likewise to support a painter devoted exclusively to this one branch of art.

The Venetian portraits of the Renaissance exhibit that perfect colour sense which has set

an unattainable standard for posterity: rich yet restrained, brilliant but tempered with sobriety. In the seventeenth century, Rubens and Van Dyck sought by careful copying to catch some inspiration from the Venetian manner. In the eighteenth century Reynolds tried to discover the Venetian "secret" by scraping and analysing the pigments of the old canvases. All in vain. Among their many imitators the Venetians still remain supreme. Never again can the same conditions of life be repeated which created such an art.

Colour and decorative quality being of so much moment, we cannot suppose that the Venetian portraits were as a class strong in point of likeness, though there are notable exceptions. The one essential which the painter could not help imparting to his subject was dignity. Ceremony was the business of life: the portrait had to show the immense consequence of the Venetian. It goes without saying that rich costumes were much in evidence in all the work of this school, and the painter was expected to be somewhat flattering. The anemic is practically unknown in

such art; every man, woman and child is well fed, and well kept.

The Bellini family, Jacopo, and his sons Gentile and Giovanni, were all painting portraits in Venice in the mid-fifteenth century. Jacopo had received his training from the Florentine Gentile da Fabriano, and was, we believe, an able craftsman, though few works remain by which to judge him. It is Giovanni who brought highest honour, both to the family and the school. He is the representative Venetian painter of his period, and in some respects the leader of all fifteenth century Italians. His continuous activity through the entire length of his nearly ninety years meant a large output of portraits as well as of religious and historical compositions. During his appointment as state painter of the Republic he must have painted a great number of prominent personages, including at least four doges. His portrait work was admired all over Italy, and Isabella d'Este was among his patrons. Could all his work have been preserved it would make a gallery as representative of Venetian

political and social life in the fifteenth century, as does Titian's that of the sixteenth century. An unfortunate fate has swept them away, leaving us only one of unquestionable authenticity, the Doge Loredano. As a scientist can deduce an entire organism from a single bone, so the critic can infer from this single portrait the distinguishing qualities of Bellini's art. The pose is that of a sculptured bust, and the noble old man carries head and shoulders erect, with serene dignity. The face is austere but genial, firm but magnanimous, and altogether splendidly sane. The golden colour and decorative costume make a rich ensemble such as only Venice could produce.[1] Such was the quality of the work which called forth the admiration of Dürer, when he visited Venice and made friends with the old man Bellini. Though the Nuremberger could never hope to emulate the Venetian richness of palette, there were points of contact between the two men in the sincerity and directness of their style.[2]

[1] A profile of the same head from the school of Bellini is in the Dresden gallery, a copy of an original at Bergamo. [2] See page 103.

National Gallery, London] [Bellini

PORTRAIT OF DOGE LOREDANO

Gentile Bellini, though far less gifted than his brother, was yet an excellent portrait painter. He was sent by the Venetian senate to Constantinople in place of Giovanni, who had received the invitation but was too busy to leave. Gentile painted the portrait of the Emperor Mahomet who, amazed and delighted at the likeness, asked if the painter dared portray his own features. In a few day's time the Venetian brought him his answer in a portrait of himself, made with the help of a mirror. Such a marvel could only be explained on the hypothesis that some divine spirit had been pressed into the service. The Sultan apparently felt rather uneasy over such magic, especially as the Mohammedan law was as strict as the Mosaic about representations from nature. Gentile was not long after sent back to Venice, loaded with gifts and honours.

Antonello da Messina, though not a native of Venice, came to that city in 1473, when Giovanni Bellini was well advanced in his career. Under the influence of this master, and in Venetian surroundings, the stranger

made a rapid advance, and devoted his later years almost exclusively to portrait painting. He is credited with introducing into Venice the use of oils, as practised in Flanders. In his earlier years he had imbibed much of the Flemish spirit, either from a visit in Flanders — a doubtful hypothesis — or from the study of Flemish works. The union of these two tendencies makes his pictures very interesting. His portrait faces are in three-quarters front, in the Flemish manner. Some of them suggest at once the works of Van Eyck. The "Condottiere," of the Louvre, is a kindred spirit of the "Man with the Pinks," in his aggressive ugliness.[1] He has a large, coarse face, framed in bushy hair, and his lower lip is thrust out truculently. Such uncompromising realism is more Flemish than Venetian. Like the transalpine painters also, Antonello sought after an expressiveness which means more than mere outward beauty. Some of the homeliest and most unattractive of his subjects are strongly characterized. Sometimes, indeed, in his effort towards ex-

[1] See page 87.

pression, he exaggerates his lines to produce an almost strained effect, but this is a fault which the much greater Dürer sometimes fell into. Ten existing portraits are listed as his, all men. Like Bellini, he apparently painted only the bust of his sitters. A contemporary of the Bellini and Antonello da Messina was Alvise Vivarini, whose portrait work has close affinity with these men, as well as with the younger man Lotto. Recent criticism attributes to Vivarini several excellent portraits.

With the advent of Giorgione a new spirit entered into Venetian art. The influence of his short life and slender output is incalculable. So fully did his contemporaries adopt his manner, that critics are for ever perplexed in settling the attributions in his group. Portraits long regarded as Titian's, like the Doctor Parma of the Vienna gallery, and the Cobham Ariosto, as well as the Poet in the National Gallery, attributed to Palma, and the Three Ages of Man (Pitti), credited to Lotto, are now claimed for Giorgione. It is the part of wisdom to designate such interchangeable works as "Giorgionesque," for all

have in common the qualities which the Castelfrancan painter introduced.

Giorgione deepened and enriched the prevailing Venetian palette, and softened the outlines which with Bellini, Vivarini and Antonello, had been indicated in the hard Flemish manner. He had also extraordinary skill in rendering textures. Above all, he introduced the romantic element in place of the matter of fact and prosaic. The remote expression, the meditative gaze, the air of pensive melancholy lend interest to the plainest subjects. The Knight of Malta ponders his pilgrimages, the youth of the Berlin Gallery dreams of his love, the young man of Buda-Pesth is lost in his memories. The lady of the Borghese smiles faintly, as if pleased with her thoughts. All these portraits show the hands, which add not a little to their expressiveness and individuality. It was not in the nature of Giorgione's art to give great strength or virility to his sitters, but he imparted the essence of his own poetic temperament. His portrait work struck a graver note than his subject pieces, which are serene

and joyous, while his sitters are in some instances quite serious.

Palma Vecchio is closely associated with Giorgione in the development of Venetian art in the qualities which are its distinctive glory. His colour, though not so rich and subtle as Giorgione's, is brilliant and glowing, harmoniously blended to obliterate all hardness of line. Though largely occupied with altar-pieces, he was much sought after by the great Venetian families for his portrait work. He was especially popular for his women's portraits. The fashionable beauty of the day must needs be a blonde. All grand ladies dyed their hair golden, and prided themselves on the whiteness of their skin. This is the type reproduced in so many of Palma's beautiful canvases. Enhancing the charm of their beautiful hair and dazzling necks are the rich costumes of brocade and gorgeous stuffs which the Venetians loved. Palma's women are not especially graceful, and are mostly too plump for elegance. Nor are the faces at all intellectual or expressive, but are simply placid and sweet. The painter was not a

profound thinker or even a poet. He was somewhat deficient in the sense of distinction so marked in other Venetians. But he delighted in the beauty of flesh and blood, and painted them *con amore*.

The model known as Violante, once erroneeously thought to be Palma's daughter, figures very often in his pictures. Her portrait in the Vienna Gallery probably shows the young girl pretty nearly as she was in real life. The face is amiable, with small regular features, though without piquancy or charm, but the waving golden hair, and the full white bust and shoulders gleaming above her rich dress, make her a beautiful creature. She is grandly idealized in the majestic St. Barbara, and more delicately spiritualized in the lovely St. Lucy. In the " Jacob and Rachel " she is a buxom country girl, and again in the " Sisters," where she assumes three poses, she has developed an avoirdupois which no amount of finery can etherealize.

Sebastian del Piombo was a Venetian of the same generation as Palma and Giorgione, and though he spent the greater part of his

life in Rome, he always retained some of the characteristic Venetian qualities which he imbibed in his early years. From Raphael and Michelangelo he derived other elements which made a unique combination. The story of his rivalry with Raphael makes one of the most gossipy pages of art history. It is said that one day when Raphael passed through the Vatican with his retinue of pupils, the Venetian exclaimed, " You go by like the Bargello with his posse," to which the popular favourite rejoined, " And you go alone like the executioner." After describing at length Sebastian's religious compositions, Vasari goes on to say, " To tell the truth, portrait painting was the proper vocation of Sebastiano." Then follows an account of the distinguished sitters whose likenesses were " so well done as to seem alive." The beautiful Vittoria Colonna is in the list, the celebrated Andrea Doria, the Pope Adrian (four times), Aretino, the poet, and many other notables. As Vasari was on the whole unusually severe in his estimate of Sebastian, his encomiums are a bit more worth noting when he declares

that in Florence no one had ever equalled the delicacy and excellence of his work. In some of his women's portraits certainly, like the "Fornarina," and the Dorothea, Sebastian embodied with great charm, the type of a somewhat languishing beauty, rendering with much decorative effect rich mantles of velvet and fur to set off the beauty of a full white neck. His art has been aptly described as "a happy mixture of the Giorgionesque, the Raphaelesque, and the Michelangelesque."

Lorenzo Lotto was the psychologist of his day. He surpassed all other Venetians, as Leonardo surpassed the Florentines, in his power of insight. Like Giorgione, he was something of a poet, but with the difference that his poetic temperament was dramatic rather than lyric. Such qualities are almost as readily discerned in portraiture as in religious subjects. The life story of every sitter may be suggested by certain painters, whereas others represent only the impenetrable mask of the face. The unknown lady (Laura da Pola?), at her reading-desk, with her prayer

Brera Gallery, Milan] [Lotto

PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN LADY
(LAURA DA POLA ?)

book in her hand, is so completely alone with her thoughts that we seem to read them in her countenance. Though the rich dress betokens the aristocratic *milieu* in keeping with her air of distinction, the current of her thoughts is disturbed by doubts, perplexities and longings. The interpretation is noticeably in the minor key, as is apt to be the case with Lotto. The Prothonotary Julian, splendid in the ermine trimmed robe of his office, calm and dignified in the pursuits of scholarship, is yet serious almost to melancholy. This is a portrait superb with a decorative ensemble which reminds one of Holbein. The table with its Oriental covering, on which lies the open book, matches the setting of the Erasmus.[1] Like Holbein, too, Lotto painted the sitters' hands with wonderful expressiveness. By such occasional resemblances between the Venetian and Northern European schools we are reminded that Venice was a half-way house for transalpine travellers, where all interesting ideas were cordially welcomed. The characteristic Venetian element in the picture which we

[1] See page 114.

should not find in a Holbein is the window opening upon a landscape.

A strong sense of intimacy is conveyed in those of Lotto's portraits where the eyes meet ours. This is the case with the Man with the Claw, who seems explaining to us the wonder of the organism. He is something of a mystic with his penetrating gaze, and the exaggerated impressiveness of his gesture. In direct contrast is the homely simplicity of Agostino and Niccolo della Torre, who look out at us frankly with entire absence of pose. They are plain and kindly souls, with genial faces untroubled with anxieties. This picture belongs to the period immediately following Lotto's sojourn in Rome, where he gained something from Raphael. It is like Raphael's work in its unflattering realism, recalling the portrait of Castiglione.[1] From these scattered examples we see the compass of Lotto's work, and his own peculiar bent. Keenly sensitive and sympathetic in nature, he seemed to read the souls of men. None has ever understood better how to express in a portrait the inner

[1] See page 39.

life. His colour links him closely with his generation of Venetians and shows the influence of Giorgione.

Giorgione, Palma and Lotto were all nearly of an age, though Giorgione dropped out of the race so early in life that we are wont to think of him as of an earlier generation. Titian was born in the same year as the Castelfrancan (1477), but was much later in maturing his art. His life rounded out nearly a hundred years, bringing his highest achievement so well into the sixteenth century that he is usually identified with the later group of Venetians.

CHAPTER IV

TITIAN AND THE LATER VENETIANS

NO other painter ever united in himself so many qualities of artistic merit as Titian. The chief of the Venetian school, he represented in the highest degree all its characteristic excellences. If others surpassed him in single efforts, or in certain respects, none equalled him in sustained grandeur. In his extraordinary length of days he acquired full mastery of his materials. There was nothing in craftsmanship which he could not accomplish with ease and rapidity. With unsurpassed technical equipment was combined an imagination of unlimited range, powerful yet delicate, dramatic but not theatrical, exuberant but restrained. Delighting in the sheer joy of living, he was yet sensitive to the most subtle phases of the inner life. Partaking fully of the Venetian love

Uffizi Gallery, Florence] [Titian

PORTRAIT OF TITIAN

of pomp and splendour, he knew the value of simplicity. Sometimes, like Palma, he painted a woman merely as a beautiful creature of flesh and blood; sometimes, like Giorgione, he enveloped his sitters in an atmosphere of poetic serenity, or again, like Lotto, he unveiled the secrets of a soul. Most frequently, however, he was himself, Titian, giving to his subjects that air of nobility which no one else could give, an appearance of entire self-command. He was by turns subjective and objective, always putting something of himself into his work, yet capable of a thoroughly objective realism. His colour, rich, profound, sonorous, unites all tones in a perfect chord.

The portrait work of Titian ran side by side with his religious and mythological subjects throughout his career. His patrons were dwellers in kings' palaces. Emperors, kings, doges, popes, cardinals and bishops, noblemen, poets and beautiful women fill his canvases. Nor was there one among all these great personages of finer bearing than the painter himself. "He was the noblest Roman of them all." A group of male portraits in the

decade from 1520 to 1530 show the earlier methods of Titian. The simplest elements are used to produce noble effects. The figures are in half-length, placed high on the canvas, wearing plain black clothes, relieved only by a touch of white at the throat. They are young men, feeling the responsibility of their caste, high-bred, refined, grave and thoughtful, the personification of repose. One of these was Tommaso Mosti, who was secretary of the Duke of Ferrara. Another has been called, but probably incorrectly, Alessandro de' Medici, but the majority are unknown.[1] The most winning is the Man with the Glove, in the Louvre, a Venetian Sir Galahad.

To the same period also belong some portraits of a much more decorative order. One is of Federigo Gonzaga, in three-quarters length, richly dressed, standing by a table, with his hand on a little pet dog. This son of Isabella d'Este had been, as we know from Francia's portrait,[2] a charming boy. His brilliant mother spared no pains with his edu-

[1] In the Louvre, and in Munich and Berlin.

[2] See page 20.

cation, and he spent three years in Rome at the court of Julius II. At the age of twenty he succeeded his father as the Duke of Mantua, and was soon after made Captain General of the Church. It was near this time that the portrait was painted, showing him as he was, an amiable pleasure-loving young man of fashion, rather than a soldier or diplomat. Force and energy were not Titian's special note with his young sitters. On the other hand the portrait of the Doge Andreas Gritti, painted at nearly the same time, shows all the force of an imperious will. This old man, with the keen glance, and firmly compressed lips, is a ruler not to be trifled with.

In 1532 Titian was summoned by the Emperor Charles V to paint the first of the long series of portraits which have linked the name of the great painter with the court of Spain. Half Flemish and half Spanish, Charles was by no means a prepossessing subject. His face was long and narrow, and his lower jaw protruded unpleasantly. Titian, however, knew how to throw a kingly glamour over the figure which overcame all defects. Standing

in his rich court dress, with his hand on the head of a great hound, Charles made a splendid and spirited picture. Fifteen years later he was painted again in all the weariness of his increasing years, seated in a large armchair. The painter has shown great insight into the character of the morbid and weary old man. The equestrian portrait of the same year (1548) is accounted by some one of the greatest portraits in the world, while others criticize the ignorance of equine anatomy which it displays. In the course of his service of the emperor, Titian made various journeys to the towns where the court was held, Bologna, Mantua and Milan, and even took the fatiguing journey across the Alps to Augsburg, when nearly seventy years of age. His genius was highly appreciated by his royal patron: he received a pension and was created Count Palatine of the Empire, and Knight of the Golden Spur. The story is told that at one of the portrait sittings, Titian let fall a brush which the emperor, picking up, restored to the painter with the gracious words: " Titian is worthy to be served by Cæsar."

It was not only for his own likeness but for many other pictures that the emperor employed Titian. One of his most interesting orders was for a portrait of the Empress Isabella, who had died in 1539. This work was painted with the help of an old picture, and while lacking the vitality of a direct study, it is full of charm.

In the last years of his life, Charles V, worn out with the cares of government, retired to a convent, relinquishing his kingdom to his son Philip II. In the new monarch Titian had another generous patron for whom he exercised his choicest gifts. Again he made the impossible possible in transforming ugliness into kingliness. Philip had a poor figure, with large, ungainly feet, and his features were almost repulsive. His eyes were large and bulging, he had his father's projecting jaw with full fleshy lips, which his scanty beard could not conceal. In spite of these difficulties, Titian made him the subject of some of his finest portrait work. Whether standing in splendid suit of gold inlaid armour, or in rich court dress of embroidered

velvet, Philip looks every inch a king, grave, self-contained, distinguished. A full-length portrait in armour was sent to Queen Mary of England in furtherance of the king's suit for her royal hand. Word was returned that she was " greatly enamoured " of the portrait, and the marriage was soon after effected. Philip, however, was never popular in England, and after Queen Mary's death returned to Spain to spend the rest of his life. Cruel, sensual and fanatic, his reign is a poor record of mistakes and atrocities. Nevertheless, while better kings are forgotten, he achieved an immortality due largely to the genius of Titian.

For psychological insight the group of portraits for the Pope Paul III show Titian at his best. It was in 1543 that he was invited by the Cardinal Farnese to Ferrara and Brussels, where he painted the portraits both of his host and the old pope. This was the pope, it will be remembered, who excommunicated Henry VIII, who assembled the Council of Trent, and who ordered the Last Judgment to be painted by Michelangelo in the Sistine

chapel. A saving sense of humour was his most agreeable trait. One recalls with amusement his reply to the chamberlain who complained of being portrayed by Michelangelo in the Inferno. "If it had been in Purgatory, I might have done something for you, but I have no authority in hell." Something cunning in the sharp old eyes, something sinister in the wide mouth, whose shape is defined even beneath the heavy moustache and beard, and something wary in the peculiar drooping pose of the head strike us at once in these portraits. Two years later Titian was called to Rome, and once again painted the pope with powerful effect. The old man is seated by a table, attended by the Cardinal Farnese and his grandson Ottavio. The composition recalls that of Raphael's Leo X, with differences. The pope turns to address Ottavio who bends obsequiously towards him. The self-revelation of both men is amazing: the old man, cunning as a fox, the youth, vain and fawning.

From the immense popularity of his work Titian derived an income which enabled him

to live like a prince. When somewhat over fifty years of age he set up an establishment at Casa Grande, just outside Venice, in a spot overlooking the lagoon, opposite Murano. Here he laid out a beautiful garden, and here he entertained his guests with lavish hospitality. His wife having died a few years before, the darling of the home was his daughter Lavinia. In her girlhood Lavinia made a charming portrait subject. Richly dressed in brocade, and with jewels in her bright hair, Titian painted her lifting high a plate of fruit. The pose was exactly suited to the curves of her plump figure, and her fresh colour and vivacious smile lent themselves to the pretty conceit. Her beauty was not, however, of a lasting kind. When a few years after her father again painted her portrait in honour of her betrothal, she had already lost her kittenish grace. She stands rather awkwardly, though with something of a shy sweetness in the expression, holding a fan in one hand. What the figure lacks in grace is amply made up in the brilliant treatment of the flesh, and the texture painting. Ten

years later Lavinia had become a stout matron, bourgeoise and amiable, but not interesting, still richly dressed and carrying her large feather fan complacently. Two portraits of this period are quite commonplace.

This group of pictures suggests Titian's characteristic point of view in women's portraits. Though he loved Lavinia devotedly, he did not try to invest her with any romantic glamour. He seemed to reserve his more poetic and psychological moods for men. Even in painting the Virgin and saints he did not touch a much higher key than in his mythological subjects. Life, abundant, serene and joyous, was his theme. With a beautiful woman before him, he lavished consummate skill upon her hair, her neck and her fine raiment, but ignored the psychic factor. The Flora is one of the most beautiful of his women, the model for the Medea and Venus ("Sacred and Profane Love"). What art lover does not recall with delight the long curve made by her drooping head, the soft appealing eyes, the hair shimmering like spun gold against the white skin? Yet Flora is

only a beautiful soulless creature. La Bella carries her head like an exquisite flower on a long stem. Every feature is perfect, every line of her figure graceful, she has the bearing of a princess. But she is a figure-head, rather than a woman of thought and character. Eleanora Gonzaga might well feel flattered to have her features so idealized, but the painter did scant justice to "the wisdom, genius, courtesy and refinement" which the courtier Castiglione attributed to her. Eleanora was in the forties when Titian painted the companion portraits of the Duke of Urbino and his good wife. Francesco Maria della Rovere was general-in-chief of the Venetian forces, a man of military prowess and very violent temper. His portrait in full armour gives complete expression to his warlike spirit. The duchess is amiable, placid, and as in the Bella picture, not over intellectual. Another great lady whom Titian painted was Isabella d'Este, but this portrait is known only in Rubens's copy. Allowing amply for the difference between painter and copyist, we must yet be disappointed that the most intellectual

Pitti Gallery, Florence] [Titian

PORTRAIT OF LA BELLA

woman of her period should look so wooden.[1] It seems another proof of Titian's lack of interest in feminine psychology.

The friends and associates of Titian represented the wit and learning, as well as the wealth and aristocracy of Venice. One of his closest intimates was Aretino. This poet has been called the "founder of modern journalism," and certainly his influence was as powerful as the press of to-day, a letter, a poem or an epigram from his hand making or breaking a reputation. He was by turns flattering, abusive, ironical, insinuating. His character was notoriously licentious, but he was assiduously fêted, for everybody feared him. If there was any good side to this strange man, he showed it to Titian. The two enjoyed many tastes in common, especially the love of nature, and the love of art. A letter from Aretino to the painter describing a sunset, ends with a genuine tribute to his friend's art. "What marvellous clouds they were," he wrote, "I gazed astonished at the varied colours they displayed. The nearer

[1] See pages 20 and 28 for references to other portraits of Isabella.

masses burned with flames of sunset, the more remote blushed with a blaze of crimson less afire. Oh, how splendidly did Nature's pencil treat and dispose that airy landscape, keeping the sky apart from the palaces, just as Titian does. . . . With her lights and her darks, there she was, harmonizing, toning, and bringing out into relief just as she wished. Seeing which, I, who know that your pencil is the spirit of her inmost soul, cried aloud, thrice or four times, 'Oh Titian, where are you now?'" It is the finer Aretino of such impassioned outbursts whom Titian's portrait reveals, splendidly dressed as a prince, with noble bearing and an expression of poetic insight which redeems the sensual face. The mouth so habituated to a sneer is partly concealed with the long heavy beard.

Time and space would fail to describe in full the noble company of sitters who still live on Titian's canvases. Vitality is their common possession. They live and breathe as truly as when they sat in Titian's studio over three hundred years ago. Yet they all belong to a higher sphere than our common every-

day world, as if they had their being in a rarefied atmosphere of noble sentiment. Or again, it is as if, in some one's fanciful phrase, "they had sat to music." Their eyes do not meet ours with any sense of intimacy; their glance is averted with fine reserve.

As years went by, honours increased upon Titian. In 1574 King Henry III of France, passing through Venice as the guest of the Republic, visited the painter, and found him at the age of ninety-seven still hale and hearty, still painting, and still entertaining with princely hospitality. Two years later he died of the plague, having nearly rounded out a century of life.

A follower of Titian who caught the master's spirit in an extraordinary degree was Paris Bordone, a man whose works are not numerous enough to give him his deserved place in Venetian art. Some splendid portraits from his hand show a rare gift of colour. The most attractive are of women. They embody in full perfection the blonde, Venetian type of beauty, but are somewhat stiff in pose.

A charming portrait of a little boy shows how well he understood child life.

Tintoretto was a follower of Titian by dint of his own perseverance. His stay in the master's studio was of brief duration, terminated according to tradition by Titian's jealousy of his precocious pupil. There was nothing, however, to hinder the young man from studying Titian's works scattered throughout Venice. Inspired by their splendid colour, he took for his ambitious standard, "the drawing of Michelangelo and the colour of Titian." A little episode shows his cleverness as an imitator. Taking a sketch by Titian he covered it with lampblack, and then painted a head in Titian's manner on the same canvas. Exhibiting this to a company of artists who had been boasting of their knowledge of the master's art, they all agreed that this was a real Titian, whereupon Tintoretto, erasing the lampblack, showed them how few really understood painting.

Tintoretto first attracted notice through some portraits painted with peculiar lights and shadows which suggested the epigram:

Uffizi Gallery, Florence] [Paris Bordone

PORTRAIT OF A BOY

"If Tintoretto shines thus in the shades of night
What will he do when radiant day has risen?"

In later years his work lay largely in the line of great decorative schemes, but he had besides a wide vogue for portraiture. He lived nearly twenty years after Titian's death, and with indefatigable industry, produced a volume of work far exceeding that of any other Italian. Sebastian del Piombo remarked that Tintoretto could paint in two days as much as he himself in two years.

One of his patrons was Aretino, who was, as we have seen, greatly feared for his sharp tongue. During the portrait sitting the painter suddenly approached the poet, taking a large pistol from his doublet. Aretino drew back with a start, when Tintoretto, applying the weapon as a measuring stick, calmly remarked, "You stand two pistols and a half high." It is said that Aretino, bully as he was, afterwards treated the painter with marked respect. Sansovino was another of his famous sitters. The architect spent the latter half of his life in Venice, where he designed many buildings, and was held in high

esteem. Vasari gives us a delightful account of his old age, corresponding closely to the impression of Tintoretto's portrait. "He had," he wrote, "an exceedingly venerable appearance; with his beautiful white beard he still retained the carriage of his youth: he was strong and healthy, even to his ninety-third year, and could see the smallest object at whatever distance." Another grand old man was the Doge Marcantonio Trevisano, wearing an ermine cape, and the cap of his office. As he sits erect and commanding, one cannot imagine infirmity making any inroads upon so impregnable a constitution.

Tintoretto's distinctive contribution to Venetian portrait painting was his pictures of old men: senators, procurators, and dignitaries of various sorts. Apparently he was not flattering enough to be popular as a painter of women. No one previous to Rembrandt had so fully understood the beauty of age: the expressiveness of wrinkled skin, of hollow cheeks and sunken eyes, and the glory of white hair. But Rembrandt was inclined to emphasize the element of pathos, while

Uffizi Gallery, Florence] [Tintoretto

PORTRAIT OF THE ARCHITECT, SANSOVINO

Tintoretto preferred the note of strength. In the old men of his canvases the unquenchable fire of youth still burns brightly, the spirit triumphs over the infirmities of years. The splendid virility of these veterans makes us wonder anew at the conditions of life which produced such specimens of mankind. His subjects have the gravity characteristic of the Venetian school; they take their portrait sittings solemnly. They lack the air of grand distinction which Titian imparted, and they are not the dreamers Giorgione would have made them, but they meet our gaze with an air of living reality.

Included in the school of Venice are certain painters of North Italy who felt directly or indirectly the influence of the great Venetians. Romanino of Brescia was one such. In his early manhood he spent a few years in Venice studying the works of Giorgione, whose golden tone he in some measure acquired. His occasional portrait work was admirable, showing the characteristics of his Venetian model. Of Brescia, too, was Moretto, who, though not really visiting Venice,

was actuated by a spirit akin to the Venetians. He excelled as a portrait painter, giving his sitters an air of great distinction. Among other notable patrons, he is known to have taken the likeness of the poet Aretino. Much of his work was for the house of Montinengro, for whom he decorated the Palazzo della Fabbrica in Brescia. In one room a landscape motive is finished in the foreground by a simulated balustrade which forms a portrait setting for various figures. Here and there, as if taking the air in their own garden, a pretty young princess pauses with her pet dog, to smile at the spectator. There is an old-time charm about the work which the artificiality of the plan in no wise destroys.

The Count Sciarra Martinengro was one of the most interesting of this long-pedigreed family. He was educated at the French court, where he remained till the assassination of his father called him home to avenge the crime. In the confusion of the encounter with the assassin in a public square the young nobleman accidently killed the wrong man, the victim being a kinsman. The misfortune

deeply affected his sensitive nature. He threw himself into a life of adventure and finally fell in fighting with the Huguenots. The unique charm of this personality is wonderfully preserved in Moretto's famous portrait of the National Gallery. The gentleman stands leaning on a table, his cheek supported on his hand, lost in revery. A splendid ermine collar falls over his velvet tunic, a plumed hat is worn in French fashion: he is the impersonation of romantic melancholy.

The most distinguished of Moretto's pupils was Morone, who is known almost exclusively for his numerous portrait works. Some of his pictures have been attributed to Titian, so strong was the kinship between the two men. It is even said that Titian often recommended patrons to him. Almost everybody knows the famous Tailor of the National Gallery, looking up from his cutting-table, scissors in hand, in the midst of his task. His white doublet and red hose are delightfully painted. A peculiar tinge of melancholy colours the portraits by Morone, due partly to a dis-

pirited carriage of the head, and partly to the haunting expression of the eyes, which look directly into ours. In the Tailor this seems like shyness, in the lady of the National Gallery, gentle timidity, in the Widower of the National Gallery of Ireland, it is genuine sorrow, in the man of the Uffizi, it is positive moroseness. The extreme lifelikeness of the portraits comes both from the qualities of painting and the intimacy of the direct gaze. The little girl of the Bergamo Gallery is a delightful child, one of the dear, every-day homespun kind.

Veronese, the latest and most distinguished of the naturalized Venetians, devoted himself so completely to large scenic compositions that he had no time for portrait painting. It was only as he introduced contemporary likenesses into his religious subjects that we see how admirably he adapted himself to this branch of art. In the Marriage at Cana, Alfonso d'Avalos figures as the bridegroom, and Eleanor, wife of the King of France, as the bride. Charles V, Francis I, Solyman I, and Queen Mary of England are among

Carrara Gallery, Bergamo] [Morone

PORTRAIT OF A LITTLE GIRL

the guests. The musicians represent the leading Venetian painters of Veronese's day: Titian, Tintoretto, Jacopo Bassano, and Veronese himself. In the Christ at Emmaus are the most delightful real children, some of them, the painter's own. A beautiful blonde woman stands at one side, holding a babe on one arm like a veritable Madonna, a little girl nestling at her side. A small boy on the other side peeps out from the shelter of her long cape, to watch the antics of a pet dog held by a somewhat larger boy kneeling on the pavement. In front of the table two little girls play with a big dog between them. The grace and naïveté of these children anticipate by two hundred years the spirit of Sir Joshua Reynolds. The child had been made very little account of in Venice, much less it would seem than elsewhere in Italy. Only in the disguise of angel musicians had children had a place in the sumptuous art of the great city. The portrait painters evidently rarely received orders for the likenesses of the sons and daughters of their patrons. At the height of

Venetian development comes this new note from Veronese, to bring to full completion the splendid work of the Venetian portrait school.

CHAPTER V

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PORTRAIT PAINTING IN THE NETHERLANDS

WHILE fifteenth-century Italy was rising from the new birth of art into the full perfection of her powers, wonderful things were also taking place on the other side of the Alps. The impulse of awakening was felt all over Europe, and in the north, as well as in the south, a new era opened with the new century. The form in which the art spirit expressed itself would naturally vary with temper and environment. Even Venice, as we have seen, differed materially from Florence in her art. Much more would the Flemish cities differ alike from Venice or Florence. In the Middle Ages the northern temper had worked itself out in Gothic architecture, and in the Renaissance, the same temper must inevitably work out an equally distinctive style of painting.

In the first place, mural painting, which was so prominent in Italian art, was of almost no account in Flanders and Germany. The style of building neither required nor admitted it. Religious painting took the form of many panelled altar-pieces. The art effort was, so to speak, concentrated in small spaces. This, as to mere externals. As to methods, the fifteenth-century Flemish loved, above all things, the minute detail. They regarded no smallest thing as insignificant, and dignified even the most commonplace trifles with skilful craftsmanship. To beauty of line they preferred richness of stuff: large-figured brocades and Oriental hangings, garments trimmed with fur, or embroidered with gems, heavy crowns of gold and jewelled brooches. So, too, to go deeper, it was not beauty of feature they cared for in the human face, but the exact delineation of surface, the careful reproduction of every irregularity or blemish, the minute tracing of every seam and wrinkle which makes for expression or character. Their art was addressed to the mind as well as to the eye. Such qualities were all favour-

able to portrait painting. It was as if Northern Europe were the soil designed by nature for the growth of this particular branch of art.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the two brothers Van Eyck gave a great impetus to the material side of painting by their methods of using oil. To what extent they were either discoverers or inventors is of no consequence to us. The fact remains that their practical application of this medium greatly benefited their own countrymen and the Italians as well. The Ghent altar-piece, which was their joint production, finished in 1432, brought Flemish art by a single stride, into line with contemporary Florentines. It did more. It set up a standard of portrait painting for all the fifteenth-century Flemish to follow. The donors of the picture, Jodocus Vyt and his good wife Isabella, kneeling with sanctimonious gravity on the outer shutters, are delineated to the very life. There is no artistic evasion here. The task is not made purposely easy by posing the figures in profile, or reducing them to half length. The

painter faced his problem squarely and solved it successfully. Jodocus is uncompromisingly himself in every line of his big commonplace face, and every wrinkle of his fine old hands. Isabella, too, is neither prettier nor plainer than in real life, somewhat careworn, but wearing her years and honours with dignity. The Canon George de Pala, donor of the altar-piece in the Bruges Academy, is a marvel of character revelation. A book in one hand, pince-nez in the other, he kneels on the pavement in complacent self-sufficiency, the coarse aggressive face heavily seamed with lines of self-indulgence. The Chancellor Rollin, donor of the altar-piece in the Louvre, is a man of quite different type, sincere and devout.

Other portraits by Jan Van Eyck keep up to the same standard of psychological significance. Instead of the rather wooden profiles, such as his Italian contemporaries were painting, he portrayed the open countenance. The portrait of the painter's wife, in the Bruges Academy, is an interesting and beautiful picture of a woman not specially inter-

esting or beautiful herself, and this because she lets us read her open face so frankly. Another fine portrait by Van Eyck is of an old man in the Vienna Gallery. The face is smooth-shaven, showing the modelling of the nice mouth. There is a lovely net-work of lines around the kindly eyes, and though he is as plain as plain can be, he is thoroughly attractive and likable. The Man with a Turban in the National Gallery is refined and distinguished, with thin, sharp features, and expressive eyes.

The "Man with the Pinks" is ludicrously ugly. A modern portrait painter would pose him to bring out his best points, and soften his defects. Van Eyck was quite innocent of such flattery. It would even seem as if he purposely arranged the head to the man's disadvantage, turning upon us the full battery of his oddities. Can it be that Van Eyck was something of a humourist? More likely, however, he took an artist's keen delight in overcoming difficulties. He compels our admiration of this man, spite of his ugliness: the puffy places under the eyes, the ill-shaped

nose, the large projecting ears, the disagreeable mouth. The marvellous fidelity of detail, the beautiful rendering of textures, and the sense of vitality go to make this a masterpiece of realism. The "Man with the Pinks" is thirty years earlier than Mantegna's Cardinal Mezzarata, which is the first Italian full-face portrait to compare with it. In still another feat did Van Eyck forestall Mantegna — the full-length portrait. The double portrait of Arnolfini and his Wife, standing together in the vows of betrothal, is indeed practically two centuries ahead of time in mastery of technique. The quaintness of the costumes enhances the charm of this work: the long, fur-edged cape of the lover, with the huge broad-brimmed hat; the bride's voluminous train and the white head-dress draped over the horns of her coiffure. The solemn earnestness of the young man, looking out of the picture with upraised hand, the shyness of the maiden looking down demurely, give sufficient dramatic quality without detracting from the portrait character. The strong individuality of the man makes us sure of the

Berlin Gallery] [Van Eyck

THE MAN WITH THE PINKS

likeness: the rather slanting eyes, the large nose, and the unusually narrow cleft chin. He is more interesting, because more individual, than his betrothed, and indeed it seems true of Van Eyck's work in general, that the men's portraits are better than women's. One might go farther and say that ugly men are better subjects than handsome men, and that ugly old men are still better than ugly young men! These preferences are not peculiar to Van Eyck: they are characteristic of the Northern portrait painters, both Flemish and German. Youth and beauty do not offer sufficient scope for their peculiar gifts. Their chief aim, whatever the subject, man or woman, young or old, is to make the portrait expressive. Hence they used largely the three-quarters views, and laboured scrupulously to reproduce the individuality. The fifteenth-century Flemish portraits are, therefore, on the whole, more sophisticated than contemporary Italian works.

The same custom prevailed in Northern Europe as in Italy, of introducing portrait figures into religious compositions, especially

in the Adoration of the Kings. Roger van der Weyden's celebrated picture in Munich represents Duke Philip the Good, in the guise of the eldest king, while Charles the Bold impersonates the youngest. The painter does not even try to make the expression suit the occasion, but in the case of the younger man, paints a thoroughly characteristic portrait, full of fire and passion.

Roger van der Weyden was a pupil of Jan Van Eyck, and became in turn the master of Memling, thus passing on the influence of the earlier master to successive generations. Hans Memling was indeed a painter of great delicacy, and marked sense of beauty. His heads have more sweetness and less severity than in the work of his predecessors, while his colours are more luminous and transparent.

Like all his contemporaries, Memling had a field for portrait painting in introducing the figures of donors into altar-pieces. This fashion is carried to an amusing extreme in the Madonna in the Louvre, adored by a man and his wife, with nineteen children! The seven sons kneel behind their father, and the

twelve daughters behind their mother, and it must be confessed that the sons are as much alike as peas in a pod, and the daughters, as the seeds of an apple. This was portrait painting by the wholesale, a whole family at reduced rates, when it could scarcely be expected that the painter could take pains to individualize. Willem Morel and his wife occupy the wings of the altar-piece of St. Christopher in the Bruges Academy, and they, too, have a goodly family to present proudly to the saint. A portrait bust of Morel is in the Brussels Museum, and is presumably a study made at the same time as the altar-piece.

More celebrated is the portrait of Martin van Nieuwenhove, donor of the Madonna in St. John's Hospital, Bruges. His hands are clasped above his breviary, and he gazes absently before him with the rapt expression of a saint. This picture is a composition in every sense of the word, the background being one of the most fascinating examples of the Flemish love of detail. Two casement windows of leaded glass fill the wall space, one

having a charming bit of stained glass in an upper pane. Through an open lower sash, one sees a landscape with a bridge and tower, every detail being exquisitely rendered. Such accessories may not be necessary to the art of portraiture, but when they are kept in true subordination, they add a charming attraction peculiar to the Flemings. Van Eyck's Arnolfini and his Wife is an example in point, the interior of the room being a miracle of skill.

Some of Memling's portraits of donors have become separated from their original companion panels, and are now in galleries. Such is the charming youth in Leipzig, and such, the thoughtful young man of the Uffizi, and another example is in the Hague Gallery. In all these cases, the expression is very devout. Memling had a strong vein of religious sentiment, and he made his donors, willy nilly, fill reverently the part they assume. His other scattered portraits show him in a more objective and realistic vein. Anton von Burgund at Chantilly is characteristic and interesting, a young man in a tall hat, with pronounced individuality. Niccolo Spinelli, in the Ant-

Uffizi Gallery, Florence] [Memling

PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN MAN

werp Gallery, holds a coin in one hand, looking out gravely, and a young dandy in Cologne pleases us with his own self-satisfaction. An older man in the Staedel Institute, Frankfort, seems of gentle and amiable nature. Memling's characterizations are not vigorous like Van Eyck's; his sense of beauty apparently softened character as well as features, but the conscientious Flemish spirit is always in evidence, and united with a gift of idealization, made him an attractive and interesting portrait painter.

There was a demand for Flemish painting even in Italy. The agent of the Medici in Bruges, one Portinari, ordered of Hugo van der Goes an altar-piece for the hospital church of S. Maria Nuova at Florence. The wings contained portraits of the man and his wife, the former with two little boys, and the latter with a little girl. The portraits have the characteristic Flemish quality of the period, painted with great care and force. The odd thing is the comparative scale of the donors and their patron saints, who tower above the other figures like giants. Justus of Ghent

was another Fleming whose work was carried into Italy, he himself being summoned by Duke Federigo of Urbino to paint the portraits of the duke and duchess.

As a rule, however, the Flemish painters of this time had little to do with courts and princes. Their work was usually done at home, and for that sturdy middle class which built up the commercial prosperity of the Netherlands. Whereas portrait painting in Italy was the exclusive luxury of the aristocracy, north of the Alps it was the delight of the bourgeoisie: merchants and craftsmen, men of solid worth and industry. Could we hang together all the portraits of this school, they would represent people of about the same class, and of similar mental and moral calibre, not brilliant or highly imaginative, but possessed of the stronger virtues. The men were honest and industrious, the women, domestic and modest. This class of people did not affect the study of classic literature as an amusement, and did not care much for mythological art. Their plainer and more prosaic tastes inclined them to the subjects

they could best understand, and what could they understand better, or more greatly enjoy, than their own likenesses? Thus the art of portrait painting took firm root on fertile soil.

Making the transition in Flemish art from the fifteenth to the sixteenth century, was Quentin Massys, who lived till 1530. His portraits were not numerous, but we may cite as worthy companions of the pictures grouped here, his two portraits of the Chancellor Carondelet. One of these is in the Louvre, and the other in Munich. The man gazes directly out upon us, with square open face, and firm thin lips. He is handsome, in the sense that he has great dignity of character, and strong, well modelled features. At Frankfort is a portrait of a man with spectacles, looking up from a book which rests on a ledge before him. It is an interesting and suggestive face, though the pose is rather meaningless. This brings us to the end of our chapter in the beginnings of Flemish portrait painting. A century later the Flemings were again heard from with no uncertain tone in the progress of this art.

CHAPTER VI

ALBERT DÜRER AS A PORTRAIT PAINTER

A CITY of steep-roofed houses, adorned with gables and oriole windows, of noble Gothic churches, with carved portals and fretted towers, of arched bridges spanning the river which flows through the center of its busy life, of sculptured fountains standing in the market-places — the whole encompassed by massive walls set with towers and bastions of every style, and all the buildings climbing, roof upon roof, to the great fortified castle on the heights — this was Nuremberg, the home of Albert Dürer.

It was under the Emperor Maximilian that Nuremberg enjoyed the most flourishing period. She then had more land than any free town in the empire. Her commerce brought her intercourse with East, West and South. She had been among the first to es-

tablish printing presses, and was actively interested in the revival of learning. Her roll call of the famous men of the sixteenth century includes the mathematician and scientist Johannes Muller, the navigator Martin Behaim, Anthoni Koberger, the "prince of booksellers," Hans Sachs, the poet, and humanists like Conrad Celtes, Lazarus Spengler, and Willibald Pirkheimer. Nuremberg was one of the first towns to espouse the cause of Martin Luther, and was bold in matters of reform. Lastly Nuremberg was by no means behind in the love of luxury which fosters the arts and crafts. The houses of the rich were decorated within and without with the handiwork of skilled artisans. The churches were beautified with sculptured works by Adam Krafft, Peter Vischer and Veit Stoss. Painting came in likewise for a share of patronage. The art impulse which had hitherto centered in the Flemish cities, had now moved in this direction. The painters' workshops were busy places, with youthful apprentices lending their aid to fill the masters' orders.

In such surroundings Dürer was trained for his life-work, and spent the most of his days. From first to last, he was a German of the Germans, and a Nuremberger of the Nurembergers. Like all prophets, he was honoured more in other cities than in his own country, but he was steadily loyal to his native place. Though he might complain of her coldness, Nuremberg was always his first love. Our painter was born in 1471, and was apprenticed in boyhood to a goldsmith. Soon he found that he preferred painting, and at the age of fifteen he entered the service of Michael Wohlgemut. We can outline his biography in a series of self-made portraits.

First there is the eager boy of thirteen, making his first experiments alone in pencil, and delighted to discover himself. It is wonderful how the little amateur sketch puts the child before us, with his earnest face, and sensitive artist's mouth. What manner of man his father was, we may see from a portrait by the young art student, painted towards the close of his four years of apprenticeship. The elder Dürer is the man of

arduous toil and anxiety, as his son has described him in a letter. The eyes and mouth are very expressive and very sad — yet gentle withal, with the sweet patient spirit he transmitted to Albert. The portrait is in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

Our portrait of his mother is of much later date, a charcoal drawing of 1514, the year of her death. Her emaciated face is deeply furrowed with lines of thought and suffering, and the countenance is marked by great strength of character and refinement.

The portrait of Wohlgemut shows the master under whose influence Dürer's youth was passed. He is a man one would like to confide a son to, not because of his great gifts — he was far from being a genius — but because he would inspire the respect and devotion of his pupils. His eyes are keen and genial, as of one who never lost touch with the interests of youth. The portrait was painted in 1516, when the old man was eighty-two, and had lived to see his pupil far surpass him.

At the close of his apprenticeship, Dürer started on a Wanderjahr of four years. It

was a period of thought and observation, when the impressionable young mind was storing up material for his life-work. He comes back, a bit of a dandy as to clothes, but with face still guiltless of beard, as fresh and innocent as a maiden's. The portrait of 1493 is a milestone of this journey. A small crimson cap, ornamented with a tufted tassel, is set jauntily on the long hair; the shirt is fancifully strapped with ribbons, and he wears a blue mantle. Yet that his soul is above his finery we doubt not from the dreamy expression.

Five years pass: Dürer has married, has set up a workshop of his own, and with a corps of apprentices, has been filling orders for altar-pieces. He is now a handsome man and is well aware of it. His long hair is carefully curled, and he wears a beard. With innocent vanity — rather let us say with an artist's sense of his own good points — he paints the portrait of 1498 arrayed in his best — a striped cap, a mantle edged with broad bands of trimming and made with fancy sleeves. At about this point his orders for

Munich Gallery] [Dürer

PORTRAIT OF OSWALD KREL

portraits begin to come in. Probably his very first was from a princely patron, the Elector Frederick, " the Wise," of Saxony, and others were from the Tucher family who were people of importance in Nuremberg. Carefully drawn, and no doubt faithful to the originals, the hard precision of these works is as different as possible from the insight and charm he showed in the subjects he cared for. Oswald Krel must have been a friend. At all events he was a most sympathetic subject. He was a young man of about Dürer's own age, wearing his hair like his, in long curls, and like him extremely thoughtful and serious. Dürer painted his portrait with great distinction and charm. The only fault, if fault it be, is that the lines of reflection are so deep as to seem almost a scowl.

In 1500 comes the most famous and beautiful of all Dürer's portraits of himself, if not the most famous of all his subjects. He has attained the full mastery of himself, and of his powers. The face looks directly out of the picture, the large calm eyes meeting ours, with an expression of deep thoughtfulness.

The face would seem too long and narrow but for the long curls which frame it, arranged with careful symmetry, and falling to the shoulders. The high noble brow, and the faultless regularity of features, the grave gentleness of the mouth are not unworthy the Christ ideal which Dürer unquestionably had in mind in assuming the pose. The hand, too, is beautiful and strong, with long slender artist's fingers. In the Passion series of woodcuts designed some ten years later we distinctly see that Dürer is his own Christ model.

The next group of Dürer's portraits was during his visit in Venice in 1505, when he astonished artists and connoisseurs with the minuteness and precision of his craftsmanship. In the prevailing Venetian fashion, he introduced portraits of real persons into religious compositions. The Emperor Maximilian kneels in the foreground of the Feast of Rose Garlands receiving a crown from the Madonna, while the Pope Julius II on the other side is similarly favoured by the Christ-child. In the rear, Dürer and his friend Pirkheimer

are among the bystanders. Of independent portraits, the Young Man in the Vienna Gallery is of interest, as showing how the Venetian influence led the painter into a softening of the outlines of the face.

A pleasant episode of Dürer's Venetian visit was his friendship with the older painter Giovanni Bellini. The story is told that the Venetian begged of the German one of the brushes with which he drew hairs. Dürer at once produced several ordinary brushes like those Bellini himself used. "No," said the other, "I mean the brushes with which you draw several hairs with one stroke." Whereupon, the painter, taking one of the brushes, drew before the eyes of his astonished friend, the long wavy tresses of a woman. The marvellous delicacy of Dürer's hair painting is indeed without a parallel. The Venetian Lorenzo Lotto was an imitator of his method, but the only painter with whom we could justly compare him is Leonardo da Vinci.

Returning to Nuremberg, Dürer took the house which still bears his name. It was in the years now following that he enjoyed the

patronage of the Emperor Maximilian. His largest commission was the series of woodcuts forming the "Triumphal Arch." There were ninety-three blocks devoted to the glorification of the sovereign, and the subjects include portraits of various royalties. Dürer's relations with the emperor were of the pleasantest, and it appears that the painter was something of a courtier. One day when the emperor was trying to make a sketch to show his idea, the crayon broke in his fingers, when Dürer, taking the charcoal, easily finished the drawing. Maximilian, annoyed at his own clumsiness, asked how this was. "I should not like your Majesty to be able to draw as well as I," was the reply. "It is my province to draw, and yours to rule." It was in 1518, when the emperor was holding the Diet at Augsburg, that Dürer, sent from Nuremberg as a commissioner, obtained a portrait sitting from Maximilian. In the Albertina collection, at Vienna, we may see the precious little original charcoal sketch, a few delicate lines suggesting with much subtlety the strong characteristics of the face: the large hooked

nose, the unbeautiful mouth, and the long oddly moulded chin. The features are somewhat softened in the finished portraits, of which there are two, one in oils in the Vienna Gallery, and one in water colours in the Germanic Museum at Nuremberg. There are besides two large woodcuts from the same study.

It was also at the Diet at Augsburg that Dürer took the portrait of Cardinal Albert of Brandenburg. From the original charcoal sketch (now in the Albertina), the artist made a splendid engraving. The face is in profile so that the heavy features are somewhat refined, and the expression of the eyes is full of thought. The engraved portraits by Dürer are indeed as interesting in their own way as his painted works. Among the subjects is the Elector Frederick, greatly increased in avoirdupois since the portrait of twenty-five years before. Here again, however, Dürer succeeded in imparting dignity to a difficult subject. In the same way he made his friend Pirkheimer a noble and interesting head, in spite of the thick neck and double chin which could so easily seem gross. It is said of Pirk-

heimer that his vehement opinions and caustic wit led him to quarrel with every friend except Dürer. Melanchthon is the subject of another engraved portrait full of interest. He has a high brow, emaciated cheeks, the peculiar absent smile and introspective stare of the mystic. Erasmus was still another famous man whose portrait Dürer engraved, reproducing faithfully the scholar's fine face.

The death of Maximilian in 1519 was a serious loss to Dürer, and it soon after became expedient for him to visit the Netherlands on business connected with his pension. All along the way he painted portraits, and still more portraits, and again portraits. At the inns he painted his hosts, to defray expenses; here and there he caught some rich patron, or some celebrity; and, greatest pleasure of all, he honoured some fellow craftsmen with portraits: Bernard von Orley, Joachim Patinir, Lucas van Leyden, Jakob of Lubek. Returning to Nuremberg, the few remaining years of his life were not very productive, but his chief artistic interest seems to have been

Berlin Gallery] [Dürer

PORTRAIT OF HIERONYMUS HOLZSCHUHER

portrait painting. His last group of paintings includes three masterpieces of portrait art.

Of foremost importance is the man in the Prado gallery, commonly, but without proof, called Hans Imhof. The rich fur collar furnishes a splendid decorative element suggesting a Venetian work. The man himself, with the strong concentrated gaze of a close thinker, is delineated to the very life. In precisely the same compositional style is the fine portrait at Fenway Court, but here the man is younger and less interesting in character. Jacob Muffel, Councillor of Nuremberg, is another of the famous trio referred to. He is a fine old man, with smooth face, and thin sharp features, and the eyes of a dreamer. He, too, wears a fur collar which Dürer could so cunningly paint. Lastly the famous Hieronymus Holschuher, also in fur collar, brings to a climax the master's characteristic method. The picture is painted with a realism so painstaking that it is almost painful, because it shows too plainly the labour it cost. Every hair seems to have been painted separately, every line studied with intense and ab-

sorbing interest. With all this attention to detail, Dürer did not fail to give life to his subject. Holschuher's individuality is so strikingly preserved, that he may well be called the best known Nuremberger of the sixteenth century, only Dürer himself excepted.

Dürer was not preëminently a portrait painter, his highest claim to immortality being his engravings. Yet his contribution to the art is not only considerable in quantity, but remarkable in quality. His work is intensely serious and expressive, thoroughly representative of the German spirit. He never got very far away from Nuremberg. As her castle towers in the background of his pictures, so her influence dominated the character of his work. Painstaking and conscientious in minute detail, he had besides the higher gifts of the portrait painter, vigour and vitality. His qualities were best adapted to the portrayal of men. There are not a half dozen women in his entire list of sitters. Apparently portraits of women and children were not much in fashion in his world.

Though Dürer was no flatterer, he yet understood the art of making the most of a congenial subject. Best of all, he was a genuine psychologist, in the true meaning of that overworked term. He chose by preference the thoughtful mood, and discerned with much insight the special calibre of the thinker. The strong vein of mysticism which is so prominent in his allegorical engravings is now and then apparent in his character interpretation. Homeliness is of course the invariable note, characteristic alike of the German nationality and the man Albert Dürer.

CHAPTER VII

THE PORTRAITS OF HOLBEIN

THE celebrated Hans Holbein was born in 1497 in Augsburg, and came to Basle while still in his teens, seeking employment as an illustrator. He had received his training from his father, who was a painter of some worth. One of the youth's first patrons in Basle was the great Erasmus, for whom he designed some pen and ink sketches for the author's private copy of the "Praise of Folly." The learned Dutchman was then in middle life, and had just taken up his residence in the German city, after journeying all over Europe. He had spent some years in Paris, he had visited Venice and Turin, and in Rome he had declined flattering proposals from Pope Julius II. Twice he had been in England, the second time as the guest of Sir Thomas More, in whose house he

wrote the "Praise of Folly." He now interested himself in the young artist, and the two men became warm friends. Holbein entered heartily into his author's meaning, and often showed a keen sense of humour in illustrating his text. At one place where Erasmus mentions his own name, the illustrator sketched a portrait in the margin, labelled "Erasmus." The author, highly tickled by the flattered likeness, exclaimed, "Oh, if Erasmus looked like this, he might yet truly take a wife." It was not till nearly ten years later, however, that Holbein made any ambitious portrait of the scholar.

In the meantime work of all sorts came to the painter's hand, and he seemed as ready for one thing as another. He was not quite twenty when he had an order from the newly elected burgomaster, Jacob Meyer, for portraits of himself and wife. Holbein proceeded like a trained expert, making first a preliminary sketch of each sitter, and then producing the finished oil portrait. The sketches, still preserved, are masterly works of art. There is nothing weak or tentative in the

line — character and expression are fully indicated — it remained only to reproduce the head in colour. Thus, at the outset, Holbein showed that he had in him the making of a master draughtsman, and a portrait painter of the first rank.

It was five years later when he again made studies of the same heads, to use in the Meyer Madonna which the burgomaster had now ordered. There is again the same delicacy of touch, and the same care in studying the expression. Meyer is posed in an attitude of devotion, raising his eyes to the Virgin. It is marvellous how the painter, while adhering faithfully to the likeness, gives nobility and dignity to the plebeian countenance.

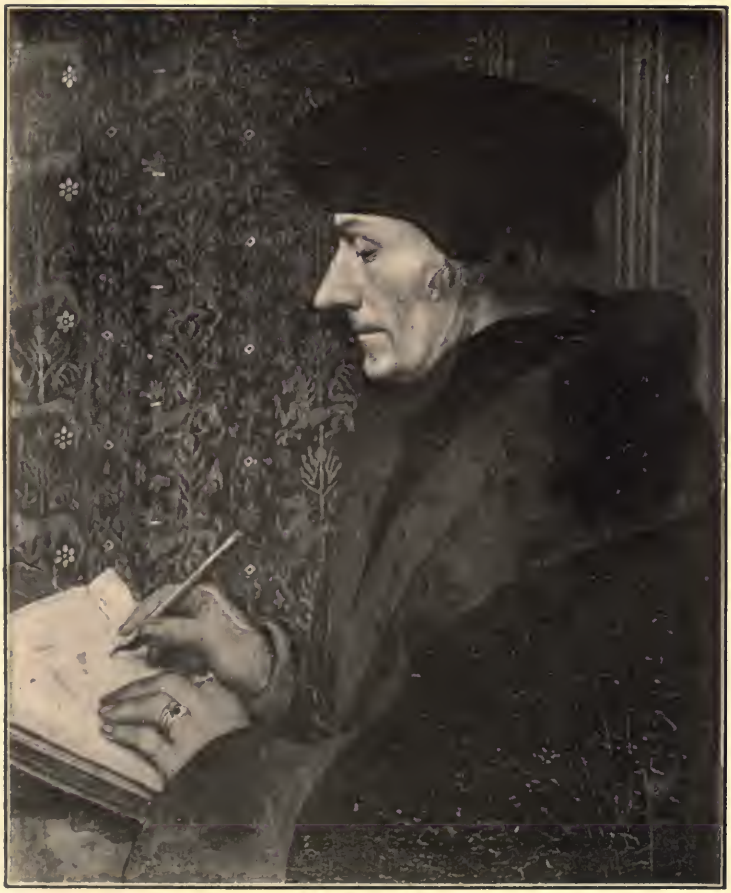
It was in 1519, at the age of twenty-two, that Holbein was admitted to the Painter's Guild, of Basle, and the date was signalized by one of his best known and best loved portraits. Boniface Amerbach was the son of a publisher, a man of parts and learning. He was possessed of great personal charm and beauty. He was a discriminating connoisseur, and an enthusiastic admirer of Holbein's art.

A more poetic and picturesque subject could scarcely be found, and Holbein did the sitter justice. The beautiful sensitive face, with the short wavy beard, is turned almost in profile, the hair clustering about the ears, the forehead shaded by a large soft cap. On the trunk of a tree, at one side, hangs a sort of signboard, with a laudatory inscription, the date, and the names of painter and sitter. All this composes admirably with the rest of the picture, and makes the scheme extremely decorative. The decorative portrait was indeed a specialty of Holbein's, and whenever he could use lettering effectively, he was sure to put it in. In this case the inscription links pleasantly the painter and the man who in after years did so much to collect and preserve his works.

In the meantime Holbein's friendship with Erasmus bore fruit in a group of extraordinary portraits. The first in order was perhaps the little round woodcut drawn for the publisher Froben in 1523, showing us the keen inquisitive face in all the sharpness of profile, and without the more mellow qualities. These, however, were well presented in

the painted portraits, of which at least three followed soon after. The best known of these is the picture of the Louvre. The scholar is at his desk, writing, the face in profile, the eyes fixed on his book. The cap is pulled far down over his forehead, and conceals all his hair but one stray white lock on the cheek. We see but little of his face, and yet we see the whole man, — the scholar and the man of the world, seeing and hating shams, yet without the boldness of a reformer, claimed by Catholics and Protestants alike, gentle and amiable, appreciative of worth, with a keen sense of humour, often verging on the satirical, and sometimes even coarse. A dark green flower-spangled curtain hung as a background is a part of an exceedingly decorative ensemble. The motive of representing the sitter in character, so to speak, came to be a very common one with Holbein. It was somewhat new for this period, and anticipated the seventeenth-century Dutchmen.

Another interesting portrait of Erasmus is the woodcut design which Holbein made for the title page of the author's published works.



Louvre, Paris] [Holbein

PORTRAIT OF ERASMUS

It is a full-length figure in ornamental frame. The scholar is now a much older man, and the face shows that he has grown disappointed and weary of life. It was in fact at about this time that the fanatic zeal of religious reformers reached such a pitch in Basle, that Erasmus and Amerbach retired in disgust to Freiburg. The attitude of Erasmus towards the Reformation may be gathered from one of his letters: "I wish some god would interfere to bring to a sudden and happy termination this drama which Luther has so inauspiciously commenced. Discord is so hateful to me, that truth itself would displease me, if coupled with sedition; and though there are many practices in the church which could be removed with great advantage to the Christian religion, yet no change will have my approbation which is conducted with tumult." Holbein must have followed his two friends to Freiburg for we have still another portrait of Erasmus in the Parma gallery. There are several copies of this head, including the miniature in the Basle Museum.

To go back now three years, the friendship

of Erasmus was the occasion of Holbein's first visit to England in 1526. Carrying an introduction from the scholar to Sir Thomas More, he was hospitably received and entertained by the distinguished prelate. "Thy painter, dearest Erasmus, is a wonderful artist," wrote back More to his friend in Basle. Holbein now undertook for his new patron a splendid family group of ten figures. What has become of this work we cannot conjecture, but we know from the preparatory drawing what the plan was. Holbein it is said took this sketch to Basle, to show to Erasmus, who was delighted with it. Fortunately we have still the chalk drawings of Sir Thomas, and his father Sir John. Of the former Horace Walpole wrote "I do not know a single countenance in which any master has poured greater energy of expression than in the drawing of Sir Thomas More. It has a freedom, a boldness of thought, and an acuteness of penetration that attest the sincerity of the resemblance."

Other portraits of Holbein's first English visit were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the

Bishop of Rochester, and the Bishop of London. Sir Henry Guilford, the king's Master of the Horse, and Nicholas Kratzer, the royal astronomer, were also in the list. For these, as was his custom, he made preparatory drawings, which vie with the finished portraits in interest, so strong and subtle is the art which in a few lines can set before us the man himself. A valuable collection of these sketches is to be seen at Windsor, having come thither after changing hands several times. Among the striking personalities represented in the number is the venerable William Warham, of Canterbury, a trifle life-weary, but still calm, phlegmatic, impregnable, while the aged Bishop of Rochester is more sensitive, more intense and more troubled, just the stuff which martyrs are made of. It is evident at a glance that these are Englishmen. Holbein did not look at his subjects through German glasses; he was a universal genius, and painted life as it was, English or German. You pick out at once the astronomer Kratzer as an alien in the company: he is thoroughly German. This is a portrait " in

character," such as has been mentioned. The astronomer is seated at a table strewn with instruments and holds one in his hand. On the wall behind him hang other implements of his profession, all adding to a picturesque and effective composition.

Holbein's English visit lasted two years, but upon his return to Basle he found the professional outlook quite hopeless. An order for the decoration of the Council Hall occupied him for a time, but the Reformation seemed to have paralyzed the popular interest in art. There was nothing for it but to return to England, but before going the painter made a portrait of his wife and two children. This is the picture in the Basle Museum so well known through reproduction. The simplicity and beauty of the grouping reminds one of Raphael's Madonna groups, so natural, so apparently unstudied, yet so consummately artistic. The fair-haired boy at his mother's knee gazes upward at his baby sister with the ardour of a child Baptist adoring the infant Christ. The matron Elsbeth, with her well moulded features, and ample bosom, would

be a fine-looking woman but for her weak eyes, which give a tired, almost cross expression to the face. In flow of line, harmony of colour, and perfect lifelikeness, the group is one of the painter's greatest successes.

Holbein's first work in England was among his own people. There was a company of German merchants in London making a little colony in the Steelyard, with a guild hall, a garden and a wineshop. From this quarter came one after another a series of portrait orders, making a most interesting group of pictures. Many of these are in business character, showing the merchant seated at his table busy with papers. Most elaborate of all such is the George Gisze of the Berlin gallery. The detail work would satisfy the most realistic fifteenth-century Fleming or seventeenth-century Hollander. The table is covered with a rich oriental rug and ornamented with an exquisite crystal vase of pinks. All sorts of fascinating writing implements are strewn about, and are attached to the walls and shelves behind. These accessories are admirably subordinated to the merchant

himself, who makes a charming and picturesque figure in the midst. Nevertheless the man is neither interesting nor clever. Dirk Tybis, of the Vienna gallery, who looks us squarely in the face, and takes himself so seriously, is rather more likable; and the bearded and gentlemanly merchant of the Windsor Castle collection is of quite a romantic type.

In the course of a few years, by precisely what steps we do not know, Holbein obtained the appointment as court painter to the King Henry VIII, holding the position till his death in 1543. His duties were as multifarious as were those of court painters in Italy. He might have to design a drinking cup, a sword hilt, or a gateway, or even go abroad on a royal errand. More than all else he painted portraits, and by the magic of his pencil and brush we are introduced to the royal entourage of these years: The bluff king himself, square faced, choleric, self willed, resplendent in finery; Jane Seymour, the inoffensive queen who was allowed a natural death; Christina of Denmark, the unsuccessful candidate for the succession; Anne

of Cleves, the unfortunate German princess who was made queen only to be divorced; the chubby little Edward, Prince of Wales; John Chambers, court physician, at the venerable age of eighty-eight; Hubert Morett, the king's goldsmith, scarcely less regal than his master in bearing and attire; Robert Cheseman, the king's falconer, carrying a splendid hawk on his wrist; Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, the king's chamberlain, bearing the mace of his office, and many other ladies and gentlemen of high degree. One of the most interesting pictures of this period is the double portrait called the Ambassadors, in the National Gallery. Beautiful accessories and rich costume give splendid decorative quality to the composition, but do not overshadow the personal appeal of the men themselves.

Strangely enough, Holbein's portrait of King Henry is lost to us. It was a monumental work in fresco, in the palace of Whitehall, showing the monarch with his family. The palace was destroyed by fire in the following century, but fortunately Holbein's cartoon is preserved, as well as various copies

by other artists of the king's figure. Thus the personality of Henry VIII has come down to us from the hand of Holbein. The portrait of Jane Seymour is in Vienna and is unsurpassed for delicate colour and decorative splendour. The lady, we can see, has the serenity of temper which stood her in good stead with her royal husband. It fell to Holbein in no small degree to choose the next queen. He was despatched to Brussels for the Princess Christina's portrait, and was granted a three hours' sitting — three hours in which to penetrate and perpetuate a personality. Certainly he never did a subtler or more charming picture than this full-length figure of the vivacious little Italian widow, caught just as she entered the room, in her widow's weeds. It is said that the king was so charmed with the picture that he promptly sent a proposal of marriage, but complications with Christina's uncle, Charles V, broke off the match. Holbein was again sent abroad for the portrait of Anne of Cleves, and this time he resorted to all the devices of good clothes to add to the charm of the subject.

Louvre, Paris] [Holbein

PORTRAIT OF ANNE OF CLEVES

Perhaps he overshot the mark. The lady's doll-like prettiness pleased the king mightily, but the pleasure was of short duration. The lady proved herself less agreeable than her portrait promised, but there seems to have been no blame for Holbein.

Few particulars are known of the English life of "Master Haunce," as the painter was called at court. They were perilous times for royal favourites, and the painter did well to steer his way safely in the fickle current of King Henry's pleasure. Changes were on every hand. Sir Thomas More, once the beloved and intimate friend of the king, was sent with the Bishop of Rochester, and other saintly men, to the executioner's block. Holbein could hardly have been insensible to the tragic fate of his former patron, but in that same year his own salary was doubled. It is said that when some courtier who had a quarrel with the painter brought complaint to the king, Henry replied, "I tell you, of seven peasants I can make as many lords, but not one Holbein." In spite of many preferments, however, Holbein longed for his native land,

and was planning to return to Basle. Before such hopes were realized, a plague broke out in London, in 1543, and to this dread disease he fell a victim.

Holbein brought the art of portrait painting a long way forward. His temper was purely dispassionate; he delineated the face before him with exact precision, neither adding to nor taking from the original in any measure. Sincerity was his strongest trait: he anticipated Velasquez in absolute truthfulness to life and character. A consummate draughtsman, his paintings show a better quality of line than of colour. A certain hardness characterizes him as a German rather than an Italian. A fine decorative sense shaped his compositions and produced some delightful effects. His love of detail and delicate craftsmanship served such ends admirably. His work is in striking contrast to that of Dürer, who was as subjective as Holbein was objective. The two supplement each other in representing the most valuable phases of the German art spirit of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER VIII

RUBENS AS A PORTRAIT PAINTER

OUR next chapter in the history of portrait painting opens some sixty-five years after Holbein's death, in the Flemish city of Antwerp. The Netherlands were just entering upon a period of respite from their long struggle with Spain. The signing of the truce of 1609 was the signal of a general revival of prosperity. Suspended commercial activities were resumed and industries again flourished. In Flanders and Brabant the industries were closely allied with the fine arts, and consisted largely in the making of beautiful things. Here were woven rich tapestries for the hangings of hall and palace. Here were produced fabrics of silk and velvet and linen fit for kings' apparel. The Flemish lace was unrivalled throughout the world in delicacy of workmanship.

In all these industrial pursuits Antwerp had once held a proud place of honour. She was besides one of the foremost trading centres of the world. In her position at the head of the Scheldt she had intercourse with all the great cities of Europe. Her quays were lined with ships bringing and carrying commercial products. The long war with Spain had changed all this. Business had for awhile been completely paralyzed, and it was resumed too late to recover the lost prestige. The tide of commerce had swept northward to Holland, and, as we shall see in later chapters, bore with it a new art impulse. Yet even in this day of decline, Antwerp was still a glorious city. There were yet commercial interests sufficient to give healthy activity to her people. Streets and quays were still pulsing with commercial life, and a spirit of tranquillity settled upon the city. Now was the time ripe for the revival of the art of painting which had fallen upon evil days unworthy of its glorious beginnings in the fifteenth century under the Van Eyck brothers. The bane of the sixteenth-century art had been the

artificial imitation of Italian painters. The saving quality had been the strength of its portrait work, and even in those bad times there were some worthy forerunners of the seventeenth-century glory — Sir Anthony Moro,[1] and Mark Gerard, so favourably known at the English court.

It was in 1608 when the young painter Rubens arrived in Antwerp after some years residence in Italy. He brought back an immense enthusiasm for the Italian masters, from Raphael to Baroccio, with special devotion to Titian. He had, however, never forgotten his youthful training in the Antwerp studios of Adam van Noort, and Otto van Veen. His hand was now well practised in cunning. Already he had won high praise beyond the Alps, and he met instant recognition among his countrymen. Among the group of painters then living in Antwerp, admirable as was their work, he was easily supreme. Two years later he was appointed court painter to the Archdukes Albert and Isabella. From this time, till his death in

[1] See page 253.

1640, he made his home in Antwerp, though taking several important journeys abroad.

The influence of the Spanish regent was in every way favourable towards creating an art atmosphere. Isabella Clara Eugenia was the daughter of Philip II of Spain, who, like his father, had been an ardent admirer of Titian. She had been brought up to consider painting a natural adjunct of court life. Though her father called her "the light of his eyes," he appeared to regard her solely as the means of furthering his political ambitions. Having failed to raise her to the throne of France, he conceived the idea that she might win for him the Low Countries which he found so difficult to subjugate. Accordingly he married her to her cousin, Albert of Austria, who was already in the Netherlands, that the two might be joint rulers. In 1599 the royal pair entered Brussels. During the first few years of their government the war still went on, but when the peace of 1609 was arranged, Albert and Isabella began to devote themselves to the welfare of their subjects. Their tact and consideration won universal regard,

and Isabella became really popular. In the public fêtes which the Flemings were so fond of celebrating, the two regents took an active part. They did much towards restoring the plundered and desecrated churches of the country, filling them with works of art. For the palace, too, where the court was conducted with great magnificence, paintings were liberally ordered.

Under such fortunate auspices Rubens passed his brilliant and successful life. He was a man of extraordinary industry, ordering his pursuits with systematic regularity. As commissions multiplied upon him, he employed many assistants, having a great painting establishment in the Italian manner. Increasing prosperity enabled him to live according to his tastes. Gifted with great charm of manner, as well as with excellent counsel, he made himself acceptable and useful in the highest circles. Associating with crowned heads, princes, diplomats and scholars, he was himself artist, diplomat and courtier by turns.

His enormous productivity lay in so many

directions that quite diverse opinions prevail in regard to him. A superficial traveller making the grand tour, remembers him only by the huge canvases of the Louvre, and sets him down as coarse and vulgar. The sojourner in Antwerp sees him as the idol of the Flemings, and the painter of noble altarpieces. The painter envies him for technical qualities to which every craftsman aspires: for an unerring sense of composition, for splendour of colour, for sureness of touch and bravura of execution, and for the exuberance and spontaneity of his creative imagination. His chief forte lay in dramatic composition, religious, historical or allegorical. He was happiest when filling some great canvas with life and colour and action. Portraits were incidents, or accidents, in his career, as in that of Raphael, painted now and then to please some friend or patron, or to gratify his own family affections. Overshadowed by the vast bulk of his subject painting, they have not received the notice they deserve. Though Rubens does not stand out like his famous pupil Van Dyck, as one of the great original

portrait masters, he made a valuable contribution to the art. There is wide variety in his portrait methods. Sometimes he imparts a distinction and dignity to the sitter worthy of the great Venetians, but again, if they do not arouse his enthusiasm, he makes them quite commonplace. Sometimes they are very grave and serious, and sometimes they are extremely animated. Always they are thoroughly alive. "Does this man mix blood with his paint?" exclaimed Guido Reni. Too fully possessed with the creative spirit to keep closely to the likeness, he could yet at times lose himself wonderfully in his subject.

It naturally fell to Rubens on one occasion and another to paint portraits of the archdukes, and some of these were not successful. We are greatly disappointed in the commonplace and uninteresting persons to whom the painter introduces us in the companion pictures of the Prado. It may have been true that Albert was only a plain conscientious man, and Isabella an opinionated bourgeoise, but we demand something more of them. Nor does Rubens fail to answer this demand.

Some years after the archduke's death he painted for the widowed Isabella a splendid memorial for her husband in the altar-piece of St. Ildefonso. Here he fully realized his opportunity to immortalize his patrons in the pair of portraits forming the wings of the composition. Rubens was carried out of himself in the noble inspiration of this work. In the central panel the Virgin bestows a chasuble upon the kneeling saint, while Albert and Isabella kneel on either side attended by their patron saints. The sweeping lines of their regal garments fall in harmony with the arrangement of the central group, making a splendid decorative ensemble. There is something of true majesty in their bearing, there is nobility and refinement in the faces, and above all there is an expression of exaltation which is in every way satisfying.

Of Rubens' relations with Marie de' Medici, Queen of France, a single portrait bears interesting record (in the Prado, Madrid). For this queen the painter made, as everybody knows, the famous historical series for the decoration of the Luxembourg Palace. It

was probably for a study of the queen's figure in these works, that the portrait was made. For this reason perhaps the picture is entirely free from any pretentious posing. It was the best of the many-sided woman which Rubens saw. She was charmed with the courtly manners of her painter and especially with his delightful conversation. Day by day as he superintended the placing of the pictures in the gallery, she was present enjoying the progress of the work. So he painted her as he knew her, amiable and complaisant, not burdened with her dignities, but altogether friendly and agreeable.

It was in connection with the commission for Marie de' Medici that Rubens painted the portrait of Baron le Vicq, as an expression of gratitude for that gentleman's good offices in tendering him the order. Baron le Vicq was at that time the ambassador of the Archdukes, Albert and Isabella, at the court of France. In the portrait, now in the Louvre, we see a plain, vigorous personality. The furrowed brow and thoughtful eyes show the man of judgment, but a courtier we should not sus-

pect him of being. It is a striking and virile characterization.

It was in Paris that Rubens formed the acquaintance of the Duke of Buckingham. Two portraits of this nobleman were painted, and though not standing particularly well among Rubens' works, they gave good satisfaction to the patron. It was an indirect consequence of the friendship with Buckingham that Rubens was chosen by the archduchess as the best possible diplomat to negotiate friendly relations between Spain and England. He was accordingly sent to Spain to confer with Philip IV, and here he formed the friendship of the great Velasquez.[1] Thence he repaired to England, where Charles I, who was a fine art critic, gave him hearty welcome, and at once set him to painting. The story runs that one day an English courtier, discovering the Fleming at his easel, exclaimed, "Ah, his Majesty's ambassador occasionally amuses himself with painting." "On the contrary," replied Rubens, "the painter occasionally amuses himself with diplomacy." The Rubens

[1] See page 236.

room at Windsor Castle shows in what esteem the painter is still held in England. One of its chief treasures is the delightful portrait composition of the Gerbier family. The father and mother, a baby in arms, and eight children, figure in this beautiful work, arranged diagonally on the oblong canvas. The setting is a colonnaded portico opening on a landscape in the Italian manner. With so many figures to consider one cannot think of another painter who could have managed the plan with such freshness and spontaneity of motive. As decorative as a fine old tapestry, it has besides the merit of individual beauty and distinction in every head.

It was through the good offices of Rubens that Charles I secured for England Raphael's cartoons for the tapestries of the Sistine Chapel. These precious treasures had been stored away in Flanders when they came to the knowledge of the painter.

Rubens left England loaded with marks of favour. King Charles had made him a knight, bestowing upon him a sword which he took from his own person, and a diamond ring

from his own finger. Returning to Spain he was received with highest honour by Philip, who bestowed upon him the order of the Golden Key, and ordered portraits of the royal family. It was not in Rubens to put kingliness into a man of Philip's character. Only a Velasquez, or perhaps a Titian, could make much of such a subject. The Fleming painted him with all sincerity, and showed the monarch in all his weakness. Nor is Elisabeth of Bourbon much more successful, while the young Cardinal Ferdinand is decidedly namby-pamby.

On the whole Rubens does not deal with royalty so successfully as with his own friends. Some of these were the subject of admirable portrait work. There is Rockox, the burgomaster of Antwerp, a man of scholarly mind and wise administration, with a twinkle of humour in his make-up. There is the unknown old "Scholar," of the Munich gallery, the genial man of seventy-five, whose smile has won so many friends. There is the so-called "Dr. Thulden," the typical man of medicine, with high brow, keen eyes, and an

air of quiet confidence. These are real men, thoroughly alive, and vigorously individualized. A noble portrait work, too, is the group of four friends about a table in the Pitti gallery. Here is Rubens, and his brother Philip, with Lipsius and Grotius, the celebrated Dutch scholars. The greatest of the Venetians might have been proud of such work, for the richness and beauty of the colour scheme, in which the oriental table cover and the fur collars are important decorative elements, and for the simple seriousness and noble distinction of the four heads.

But Rubens was at his best in portraiture when he was painting his family. There is no other head he made so picturesque or so distinguished as his own, no woman who compares in charm with his wife Helena, no children with the naïve grace and beauty of his own boys. His series of family pictures are a beautiful record of his domestic happiness, and a complete expression of his rare gift of portraiture under the conditions best adapted to develop this art. Rubens was first married in 1609 to Isabella Brandt, and a souvenir

of their honeymoon is the charming portrait of the bridal pair in the Munich gallery. They sit out of doors, with hands linked, in the manner made familiar to us in many similar pictures in Northern art. Frans Hals and his wife were painted in much the same style. Poor Isabella laboured under distressing disadvantages in her stiff Spanish corset, the huge ruff about the neck, and the absurd high-peaked hat perched rakishly aslant. But her shy sweet smile shows her happiness in her handsome husband, and reveals the depth of a gentle and winning nature. Isabella's face became thenceforth one of the painter's ideals of womanly beauty, reappearing in various sacred subjects.

Albert and Nicholas were the two eldest sons of Rubens and Isabella. Round-faced boys were they both, with features not over shapely, but with frank open countenances which make them very likable. In the well-known portrait at Vienna they are painted in full length, dressed in rich court costumes. Albert is in black, slashed with white, while Nicholas has a blue jacket with yellow satin

trimmings. The younger boy plays with a captive goldfinch to while away the tedium of the sitting, but Albert, with a manly sense of the importance of the occasion, stands at ease, with one arm thrown affectionately over his brother's shoulder. With grace and distinction equal to Van Dyck, is united a charm of naturalness beyond the latter. The lovely flow of line and rich colour harmony make it a perfect masterpiece.

Helena Fourment was but sixteen years old when in 1630 she became the second wife of the painter of fifty-three. In spite of the disparity in age the marriage proved a very happy one. Rubens seems always to have kept a young heart, and he lavished every token of affection upon his idol. The garden portrait of Munich (called the Promenade) shows the newly married couple in their early happiness. The two walk together along the path toward a little pavilion, a young lad, perhaps Albert, following them. Helena looks very girlish with a broad-brimmed hat set over her sunny curls, but the painter is handsome and gallant enough to suit any

young girl's ideal of a lover. The fruit trees are in blossom, the peacock spreads his gorgeous tail, a dog bounds playfully towards the fowl. The atmosphere is redolent of poetry.

A few years later came the beautiful Morning Walk of the Rothschild collection, where the painter and his young wife are teaching their baby to walk in leading strings. It is full of delightful sentiment and is almost unsurpassed in artistic excellence. Helena was indeed a beauty, and of a type precisely suited to the taste of Rubens, embodying the ideal of his dreams. It became his ruling passion to paint her portrait in every variety of pose and costume. From such an embarrassment of riches it is hard to make selections. The tall narrow panel of St. Petersburg is masterly in decorative quality, in restraint and elegance in the use of black. The lady droops her head with a pretty air of timidity, and glances askance from under her hat brim, half in shyness, and half in coquetry. We suspect her of being rather shallow, but she holds us captive, as she did Rubens. She has rather more

Museum, Amsterdam] [Rubens

PORTRAIT OF HÉLENA FOURMENT

womanly dignity in the Munich portrait, seated in a large chair. The eyes meet ours with an expression of great vivacity, as if the sitter were on the point of speaking. One is reminded of the extreme animation of some of Sargent's American women. The decorative scheme is superb — the black skirt opens over a gold brocaded white petticoat, a violet curtain is draped in the background, and an oriental carpet covers the floor. A portrait in the Amsterdam Gallery closely duplicates the head of the Munich picture.

As time passed, Helena's girlish figure became quite matronly, and added flesh coarsened her beauty. Rubens, however, was not at all disillusionized: he continued with undiminished zest to paint her as she was. Portraits of her with her little boy on her lap may be seen in the Munich gallery, and in the Louvre. It is also in this less etherealized form that she became the model for the Madonna and virgin saints, and for the various goddesses of Greek mythology. No other woman's face is so familiar to us in the entire range of art.

The portrait of Rubens himself is a surprising revelation of the man. There is no trace in his face of that vein of coarseness which we find ourselves looking for in the painter of those over-developed nudes which make many of his pictures distasteful, and some positively revolting. Surely no painter ever loved flesh and blood more than he. Yet his face is cut with the refinement and delicacy of a cameo. The fine eyes and sensitive mouth are those of a poet and a dreamer. A fondness for the exaggerated and sensational runs through many of his great canvases. Yet here is a man of reserve and self-command. The artist stood apart from his art. The Uffizi Gallery of Florence contains two portraits of Rubens. One is that of a young man at about the time of his first marriage. The other is the likeness by which he is best known to the world, painted in the vigour of manhood at the height of his career.

Again we see him in the Vienna portrait, in later life, grown somewhat weary of the cares of this world, the fine features sharpened, the face etherealized, with an increased

Uffizi Gallery, Florence] [Rubens

PORTRAIT OF RUBENS

sweetness of expression, and an incoming sadness in the eyes.

Rubens' most striking quality as a portrait painter was the power of giving vitality to the sitter. In character study he was less successful. As an eminent critic has said, "he pushed a type in the direction of his own taste." Yet there were occasions when a subject so appealed to him as to awaken his more objective mood. Then he became a seer as well as a painter, and produced works worthy to rank with the world's great portraits.

CHAPTER IX

THE PORTRAITS OF VAN DYCK

AS a pupil of Rubens, Van Dyck suffers somewhat by comparison with the great creative genius of his master. Contrasted with the splendid versatility of the older man, his gifts seem very limited. Aspiring in his early ambitions to emulate Rubens in every particular, he fell far short of the mark. Nature had intended him for a specialist, and as the years moved on he reluctantly concentrated his energies in a single direction. Portrait painting became at last his acknowledged forte. In this field the relation between the two great Flemings is reversed. Van Dyck's place is among the world's foremost portrait painters, while Rubens falls into second rank.

Van Dyck is indubitably one of the people's favourite portrait painters. It was in

the nature of his art to please. Good taste governed his work from first to last. No false note ever jarred the perfect harmony of his conceptions. In his hands a coarse subject was refined, an ugly subject beautified, and a beautiful subject idealized. Men, women and children yielded up to him the secret of the best that was in them.

The young Van Dyck was only nineteen years of age when he entered the studio of Rubens, but he was already so advanced in his craft that he was admitted to the freedom of St. Luke's Guild. For the next three years much of his work was in collaboration with his master, and the rest bears so strongly the mark of Rubens that we realize the wisdom of the older man's advice to travel in Italy. With what interest do we follow him through his five years' journeyings in the enchanted land of art. With the spell of the old masters upon him he began to come into his own. Titian was his idol, as he had been that of Rubens, and far more imitative in his nature than Rubens, Van Dyck often borrowed his motives direct from the great Vene-

tian. Such borrowings were, however, mostly in subject compositions. His portraits declared the advent of a new master.

The portrait of Cardinal Bentivoglio belongs to the Italian period, and marks a great step forward in Van Dyck's career. Nowhere in the world could the painter have found a sitter of more striking personality. Bentivoglio was born in Ferrara in 1579, and at the age of nineteen achieved a diplomatic exploit which attracted the attention of the pope. Henceforth his services as confidential adviser were in constant demand. None knew better than he how to reconcile apparently irreconcilable interests. From one responsible post to another he had finally been raised to a cardinalship at about the time Van Dyck came to Italy. In the portrait he is seated in a large arm-chair wearing his ecclesiastical robes, scarlet and white. The head is turned alertly as if to answer a question. At once we know this man for what he is: refined and scholarly in temperament, keen in insight, suave in manner, wary of self-revelation; ecclesiastic, diplomat and man of the world.

Seldom if ever again did Van Dyck produce a work so spontaneously and vitally conceived.

It was in Genoa that Van Dyck made his longest tarrying. If we may trust the figures of an eighteenth-century writer[1] he made seventy-two portraits in this city alone. The Genoese nobility gave him generous patronage, and to this day Genoa is a treasure house of his portraits. The great families represented in his canvases make a sonorous list of names: Doria, Spinola, Brignole-Sala, Durazzo, Balbi, and Lomellini. With this class Van Dyck found his own peculiar vocation. He was preëminently fitted to be the interpreter of aristocracy. Not since Titian had the painter appeared who could so ennoble his subjects. He had a magic gift of imparting to his sitter an air of dignity and elegant repose. He understood all the signs of birth and breeding, which are so elusive when we try to describe them, so unmistakable when we see them. In a word his portraits have distinction.

[1] Carlo Giuseppe Ratti: Instruzione di quanto può vedersi di pul bello, in Genoa, 1780.

A perfect illustration of these qualities is in the companion pictures of the Marchese and the Marchesa di Brignole-Sala, in the Palazzo Rosso at Genoa. A romantic interest attached to this couple whose happy married life was of such short duration. Upon the death of the marchioness the disconsolate young husband took priestly orders, and passed his life in literary work. In his portrait the marchese is mounted on a splendid white horse, an impersonation of the "verray parfit gentil knight." He rides directly towards us waving his plumed hat with one hand as if in salute. There is no gaiety in the gesture, only a grave courtesy. The face, singularly long and narrow, is that of a poet, with dreamy eyes and a melancholy sweetness of expression. The lady who was the object of this life devotion makes a charming figure standing in the portico of her palace. Her rich dress sweeps behind her in lustrous folds, a large ruff encircles her neck, and she wears a jewelled head-dress, with a long feather. Her face is small and almost child-like in expression, but she bears herself well. Apart

Pallazzo Rosso, Genoa] [Van Dyck

PORTRAIT OF COUNT BRIGNOLE - SALA

(DETAIL)

from their other more important merits as portraits, both these pictures have splendid decorative quality.

One more gem from the Genoese series must be mentioned — the dear little "White Boy," of the Palazzo Durazzo. The white satin costume suggests the name, made with baggy knee breeches which give the figure a charming quaintness. The little fellow stands leaning against a chair, arm akimbo, looking out at us with an innocent smile which goes straight to the heart. There is nothing artificial in the picture; even the child's hair is mussed, as if he had paused only a moment in his play. In freshness and spontaneity, Van Dyck never in more sophisticated days surpassed this child study.

It was probably in the year 1626 when Van Dyck returned to his native city of Antwerp, to remain for the following six years in the Netherlands. Though engaged during this period upon a large number of sacred paintings, portrait orders crowded upon him. He now had his craft sufficiently in hand to make it express his intention. It was a time of con-

tinuous growth, in which he added vigour and subtlety to his previous elegance and superficial charm. As in Italy, his patrons were largely from the wealthy and titled classes, and brought into full exercise his peculiar gifts.

The companion portraits of Philippe Le Roy, and his wife, in full length, show his high water mark. Titian himself could not have given more noble distinction to this gentleman who stands caressing a large hound, and confronting us with an expression of courteous though reserved friendliness. His beautiful wife, almost timid in her sweetness, stands with equal grace and dignity, holding a large fan. The decorative quality here, as in all Van Dyck's works, is above praise. He knew how to use to the utmost advantage all the rich accessories of costume: the shimmering lights on satin folds, the contrast of delicate lace against dark velvet, the gleam of jewels against fair skin.

Among the Spanish grandees holding official positions in the Low Countries was the Marquis of Moncada, for whom Van Dyck

Wallace Collection, London] [Van Dyck

PORTRAIT OF PHILIPPE LE ROY

(DETAIL)

painted one of his finest equestrian portraits. The man himself had neither beauty nor distinction, but dressed in full armour and enthroned upon a superb white horse, he had every advantage which art could give him. There is a tradition that Rubens had presented Van Dyck with a white horse as a parting gift on the occasion of his journey into Italy, and this is the noble animal, we are told to believe, which figures so often on Van Dyck's canvases. Whether this is so or not, Van Dyck showed an intimate understanding of horses, as well as of dogs, and in many instances introduced them with fine effect into his pictures. The horse of Moncada is not a mechanical accessory, but the most beautiful and vital feature in the composition.

An episode of Van Dyck's Netherlandish period was a visit to Haarlem and Frans Hals. Appearing at the studio incognito, he asked to have his portrait painted in two hours. Hals accomplished the order in the given time, when Van Dyck remarked that painting appeared a simple matter: he would like to try it himself. Seating himself at the easel

he had not proceeded far when Hals exclaimed in amazement, "You are Van Dyck, no person but he could do what you have done."

In the pictures of Van Dyck's Flemish period are some delightful studies of child life. The little daughter of Madame de Colyns pulling impatiently her mother's arm, and turning around shyly to the painter, was apparently "caught" upon the canvas without any attempt at posing. The essential child spirit is here: she is a real little girl. The serious little boy who stands with his father in the portrait called Richardot and his Son, is of another type, but not a whit less childlike. He is proud and happy to be with his father, and though he regards the painter's awesome preparations with no little timidity he means to stand quiet and do his part towards the picture. It was also in his years of residence in Antwerp that Van Dyck progressed in the knowledge of the eternal feminine. The face of Madame de Colyns is beautiful in motherliness, in the patience and serenity of expression which tell the story of

Wallace Collection, London] [Van Dyck

PORTRAIT OF MADAME LE ROY
(DETAIL)

her unselfish life. The unknown lady in the Louvre group of Mother and Child is exquisite in gentle refinement. Anna Wake, too, is of those rare spirits who live like Elaine in a high tower chamber of idealism. But Louisa van Tassis is a coquette. The eyes gleam with mischief, and the small mouth curves in an enchanting smile. Not since Mona Lisa has a smile proved so fascinating to so many people. Yet Louisa's smile has none of the mystery of the Italian lady's; it is frankly teasing.

A very interesting portrait of the Archduchess Isabella gives us an insight into the character of this remarkable woman. Late in life she took religious orders, and even as abbess she still held firmly the reins of government. She was sixty-six years of age when she discovered, and promptly averted, a plot to raise the Low Countries to an independent republic. This is the woman of indomitable will whom Van Dyck shows us. The severe simplicity of her religious garb accentuates the forcible character of the countenance. There is a shrewd gleam — half

humourous—in the eyes, and the large mouth, with tightly closed lips, reveals the person of determination. The story runs that at the siege of Ostend, at which she accompanied her husband, she vowed she would not change her linen till the city was hers, and looking into this face, we may almost believe she kept the vow, though the siege lasted over three years!

Van Dyck had been appointed court painter to Isabella in 1631, and in the following year came the much more important appointment at the court of England. Charles I was a genuine connoisseur, and was eager to avail himself of the best talent the world afforded. He was already an ardent admirer of Rubens, and he was quick to recognize the excellence of Van Dyck's work. He now made the painter a prime favourite, established him in a house at Blackfriars, conferred the honour of knighthood upon him and busied him with commissions.

Van Dyck's entire life up to this time had precisely fitted him for this position, as if destiny had shaped him for this sole end.

Never was court painter so fortunate in a patron, and never was king so fortunate in an interpreter, not even Titian and Charles V, nor Velasquez and Philip IV. The two men understood each other from the first. Together they set forth the Stuart doctrine of the divine right of kings. For if Charles knew how to act the part, it was Van Dyck who made him look the part. It is indeed impossible to separate Charles I in our thoughts from the portraits in which Van Dyck has perpetuated his personality. Always as we read the story of his reign there rises before us the vision of the poetic face, framed in the waving hair, with melancholy eyes, and a remote expression.

Van Dyck's nine years' residence in England were the palmiest days of Charles. He was trying his experiment of ruling without a Parliament, and ignoring the discontent of the people, was in the full enjoyment of fancied success. It was not till 1641 that England's wrath burst forth — the very year of Van Dyck's death. In the long struggle which followed there were many gallant

Royalists who held stoutly to the king's cause. Yet perhaps not one of them all, not even those who laid down their lives in the Civil War, did so much for the Stuart cause as Van Dyck had done in the royal portraits. We must accept seriously the historian's verdict, extravagant as it may seem, that these pictures, with their melancholy majesty, had a great influence in producing a reactionary sentiment in favour of the martyred king and the final restoration of the Stuarts.

Van Dyck is said to have made no less than thirty-eight portraits of the king, and thirty-five of the queen, Henrietta Maria, besides many pictures of their children, singly or in groups. A noble monument of the court painter's work is the Van Dyck room of Windsor Castle, containing twenty-two of his pictures, of which ten are royal portraits. Here is the interesting three-fold portrait of Charles, showing the head from different points of view. This was painted to send to Bernini, to guide him in making a portrait bust of the king. The sculptor examined the pictures gravely, and exclaimed, " Something

evil will befall this man; he carries misfortune on his face." In the Windsor collection is also Van Dyck's equestrian portrait of the king, riding forth under a marble arch. Still another portrait here shows him in full length, in his robes of state. Not any of these, however, equals in beauty and distinction the famous portrait of the Louvre. The setting is a wooded glade. Charles is in hunting costume, and having dismounted, stands in profile, turning towards the spectator, while an equerry holds the horse behind him. The broad-brimmed Cavalier's hat, worn jauntily aslant, the short white satin tunic, the knee breeches and high buskins, the long swinging sword, and the fierce spurs, give much romantic charm to the figure. The air of aloofness with which he surveys the scene is Van Dyck's subtlest touch. Even in holiday mood, Charles does not forget that he is king. The canvas is like a rich old tapestry; overhead the spreading branches of the tree embroidered against the cloud-flecked sky, and beneath the harmoniously interwoven figures of the king, his horse and the attendants.

The king is seen in full official dignity in the Dresden portrait, and though this picture is in all probability Sir Peter's Lely's copy of Van Dyck's original, it is thoroughly characteristic. Charles now wears the mantle of the order of the Garter, resplendent with the great six-pointed silver star. With one hand resting on a table, he turns as if to survey the whole English nation with his supercilious glance. Cavil as we may at the weakness of the face, and the affected languor of the expression, we must admit that we are in the presence of royalty. It was with the same calm majesty of bearing that we imagine him walking forth on the January morning of 1649 to meet his death upon the scaffold. "I go," said he, "from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown."

In portraits of the Queen Henrietta Maria, Van Dyck contented himself with superficial prettiness rather than with any psychological analysis. There is much in the history of this French princess that is admirable: her devotion to her husband, and her fortitude and courage in the great crisis. But in these

earlier years of her married life, her character was as yet untested, and apparently Van Dyck had no notion of its latent possibilities. The small regular features and rather insipid expression are familiar to us through their frequent repetition in half-length and full-length figures. A stiff row of curls is pressed flat across the forehead in the prevailing fashion. Perhaps the most attractive of her portraits, one altogether unique in the series, is the full-length figure accompanied by the dwarf Geoffrey Hudson. A large hat lends a picturesque charm to the composition, and the lady seems here a real human being and not a royal doll. The queen had a peculiar fancy for dwarfs which were in this period the common playthings of royalty. At the Spanish court they were in high favour, and were often painted by Velasquez.[1] Geoffrey Hudson was eighteen inches high and celebrated for his intelligence. Sir Walter Scott, in "Peveril of the Peak," tells the amusing story of the little man's first appearance at court. It was at some royal fête where a

[1] See page 248.

banquet was served. A huge pie was brought in and placed upon the board, when out stepped Geoffrey, to the infinite amusement of the queen.

The children of Charles I are, it is safe to say, the best known picture children of the world. Nearly every important gallery has one of Van Dyck's portrait groups, and copies and reproductions have carried these works far and wide. All these pictures are noticeably deficient in compositional excellence. The figures stand in a stiff row as a provincial photographer might have arranged them. The delightful spontaneity of Van Dyck's earlier child studies is altogether missing. The painter evidently regarded these groups as official portraits. The young princes and princesses were on parade, and it was fitting that they should bear their honours with dignity. Hence they pose in grown up attitudes of men and women, and are more or less self-conscious in expression. They are, nevertheless, charmingly pretty and winning. Charles, the young Prince of Wales, described even by his fond mother as

Turin Gallery] [Van Dyck

PORTRAIT OF PRINCE CHARLES
(DETAIL)

a hopelessly ugly baby, is painted with beautiful round big eyes, and a veritable Cupid's bow of a mouth. It is hard to believe that he grew up to be the weak and dissolute King Charles II. Little Mary is a miniature repetition of the queen. James, Duke of York, is more delightfully child-like than either. They all wear the most enchanting finery, which adds not a little to our satisfaction. The three eldest children are the most familiar. Two younger daughters, Elizabeth and Anne, introduced into some larger groups, are less interesting.

Van Dyck's favour with the king naturally drew to him the patronage of nearly all the English peerage. There is scarcely a great house in England to-day which does not cherish some ancestral portrait by Van Dyck. Painted in the decade preceding the Civil War, his works are of immense interest in the character study of many who figured prominently in the ensuing conflict. Foremost among them was Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, at one time the king's strongest counsellor, in whom, says the historian, "the very

genius of tyranny was embodied." Van Dyck's best portrait of the earl shows him seated with his secretary at a table. Macaulay's splendid description has made this work a famous historical document. Van Dyck is nowhere stronger and more penetrating in his character delineation. The determined mouth and glowering eyes show the resolute energy of a man whose theory of government was to rule by fear. Fearing nothing himself, he pursued his "thorough" policy until the indignation of an outraged people brought him to the scaffold.

Another of the king's counsellors was Archbishop Laud, whose persistent opposition to Puritanism made him also an object of popular hatred, and cost him his life. There is something very pathetic in the careworn face of Van Dyck's portrait, and an expression of benignity which softens our opinion of his bigotry. We can better understand how, as he took barge for the Tower, hundreds of his poor neighbours stood by praying for his safety.

One of the staunchest adherents of the

Crown was the king's cousin, James Stuart, Duke of Lenox and Richmond. He was a born courtier, a typical Cavalier, precisely the sort of figure Van Dyck loved to idealize. The Metropolitan Museum in New York is fortunate in possessing a splendid full length portrait of this young man, painted in Van Dyck's most distinguished vein. He stands with his hand on the head of a favourite greyhound, and turns his high bred face to ours with an engaging smile. The rich court costume is ornamented with the insignia of the order of the Garter, and the figure is a complete impersonation of the court life of the period.

Philip, Lord Wharton, was another young nobleman whom Van Dyck painted in a charming fancy portrait, in the costume of a shepherd. One would scarcely suppose that this rather soft-faced youth would be made of stern stuff. In later years, however, his conscience compelled him to enter the Parliamentary army, taking sides against the king whose friend he had been. Van Dyck was especially happy in painting the younger men

of the court, like Lord John and Lord Bernard Stuart, George Digby, the Earl of Bristol, and William, Duke of Bedford.

His patrons included many "fair women," as well as "brave men." There is something of sameness among them, a resemblance due not altogether to the uniformity of fashion. The painter was impartial in bestowing small features, and a rosebud mouth upon them all. Venetia, Lady Digby, is one of these favoured ladies. Another still more celebrated was the Countess of Sunderland, whom he painted many times. This is the "Saccharissa" who inspired the muse of Waller, and to whom was written the exquisite "Go, lovely Rose." The poet wrote also in praise of Van Dyck's beautiful portrait, as Petrarch had, so many centuries before, sung the praises of Memmi's portrait of his Laura. Beatrice de Cusance is a far more fascinating creature than these. She is painted in full length, turning to look at us with a half disdainful, and altogether adorable expression. As in Louisa van Tassis, the painter

has caught here a fleeting vision of a woman's soul.

As the years moved on, Van Dyck's work began to show signs of deterioration. It is hard even for a strong man to withstand the temptations of flattery and success, and Van Dyck's moral fibre was by no means of the strongest. To meet the demands upon him he was obliged to depend much upon the help of assistants, and his work became mechanical. In elegance and repose his figures were never deficient, but even this elegance became stereotyped. We weary at last of his oft repeated motives, of the pillared background, with the draped curtain, of the men with arms akimbo, and the women with hands folded in front, of the averted gaze, and self-conscious expression. In the painting of the hands we notice a decided decline from the earlier days when he reproduced so carefully their individual characteristics. Now a studio model supplied this feature for the pictures, and we find the same delicate and characterless hand with tapering fingers, reappearing indifferently on the men, women and children

of his canvases. More serious still is the accompanying decline in characterization which is especially apparent in the women.

It may be because the painter realized that danger threatened his art if he continued as he was, that he began to plan a return to Antwerp. It may be that he foresaw the troubles awaiting his royal patron in England. Doubtless he longed for another chance to paint the great subject pictures which he had always been so ambitious to produce. Rubens was now dead and he was the greatest living Flemish painter. A hearty welcome awaited him in his native land. But the painter's homecoming was never accomplished. Under the double strain of self-indulgence and professional labours his health was undermined. In the midst of his arrangements the hand of death was upon him, and his life came to an end in December, 1641.

Much has been written of the place of Van Dyck in the history of art. By universal consent his name is associated with those of the great Venetians. The leading notes of his style are distinction, repose, charm. Generally

speaking he was little of a psychologist. His patrons belonged to that social class in which reserve is a test of breeding. The painter was not required to interpret their character. Yet he was capable of a profound character study, and as opportunity offered, showed a remarkable insight into the minds of his subjects. His fine decorative sense, united with brilliant technique, gives great pictorial value to his works, aside from their qualities as portraits. His merits need no explanation: they are of the obvious kind which appeal to a wide public. While greater artists may be ignored, or unappreciated, he has always been admired. His work was the inspiration of the eighteenth-century English portrait school, and to this day his popularity is still undiminished in England and America.

CHAPTER X

DUTCH PORTRAIT PAINTING AND THE CORPORATION GROUPS

PERHAPS no country in the world has so distinct an individuality as Holland. In physical aspects, in political history, and in the character of the people, it is entirely unique. How different was the Dutch temper from that of their neighbours in the southern provinces came out during the long struggle of the Netherlands with Spain, when the seven provinces of the north formed themselves into the Dutch Republic (1579). It was a final victory of their national spirit when the Treaty of 1648 acknowledged them an independent nation, while their sister provinces still remained under the Spanish yoke.

Not all the storm and stress of these eighty years' warfare could prevail against the steady

development of Dutch commercial prosperity. Fighting, farming and fishing all went on simultaneously. The same indomitable courage which wrested victory from Spain was at the same time wresting riches from nature. In the early seventeenth century, no other country in the world had so large a fleet of vessels on the sea, meadows so rich in cattle, or cities so busy with industries. It was this material wealth which provided, not the formative causes, but the favourable conditions for the development of an art, whose foundations had been laid simultaneously with the Flemish, but whose beginnings had been far less promising. Italian influence for awhile hampered both nationalities, but the seventeenth century set them free, the Dutch about a decade behind their neighbours. It was during the golden age of Frederick Henry, whose rule as stadtholder extended from 1625 to 1647, that the Hollandish Renaissance brought Dutch art to the perfect flowering. It now took on a rare beauty of its own, neither German nor Flemish, nor yet Italian, but distinctly Dutch. It was a com-

plete expression of the new-born spirit of national freedom. While the revival of Flemish art, as we have seen, received positive help by the residence of the Spanish regents in the Netherlands, Dutch art owed little or nothing to foreign patronage. And while Flemish art always bore a strong flavour of foreign graftings, Dutch art was distinctly provincial in character.

Naturally the religious convictions of Holland tended to turn the art impulse from old channels into new. The sturdy Dutch Protestants were averse to the church decoration which was prevalent in the Roman Catholic provinces of the southern Netherlands. There was little demand for sacred altar-pieces such as Rubens and Van Dyck were painting for their Flemish patrons. As a result entirely new fields of art were opened up in painting landscape, still life, animals, flowers and the like. In the meantime the first effect was to strengthen the uses of the portrait. Now for the first time, the demand for portrait painting was so great that it was possible for a painter to devote himself exclusively to this

one thing. Every well-to-do burgher wished a portrait of himself and his wife, or better still, a group of the whole family. Even more important than such private orders was the call for large groups from corporations. There was no trade or profession which had not its own guild: drapers, wine-merchants, painters, surgeons, and so on through the list. Besides these were the military companies which were most noteworthy organizations. All these bodies took pride in having portrait groups of their members hung in the assembly halls. The fashion extended to all governing boards: the magistrates of the city, the regents of hospitals, almshouses, orphan asylums, and charitable institutions of various kinds. A veritable passion for portrait immortality was in the air. In every public gallery of Holland one sees these corporation groups. They are the most characteristic art product of the period. Often there are whole series of such works as those at Delft, in the Town Hall, and the Hospital; the four by Ravesteyn at The Hague, the five by Elias Pickenoy in Amsterdam, the six by Schooten,

at Leyden, and lastly the splendid array of eight, by Frans Hals, in the Town Hall at Haarlem. To describe them all in full would make monotonous reading, yet there is scarcely one which is not interesting as a human document and as a record of national art progress. The figures range from four or five to twenty or thirty, and as the number increases, the compositional qualities weaken. The painter had an almost insoluble problem in adjusting the exigencies of his art to the demands of his patrons. Each individual wanted a conspicuous position and a satisfactory likeness, yet how to attain this when the principles of art composition require the subordination of some elements to others? The sitters were best pleased when placed in stiff rows where all fared alike. The earlier painters contented themselves with this primitive method, and showed what manner of artist they were only in the handling of individual heads. Mierevelt's Anatomy Lesson (1617) at Delft, is of this class, and in spite of its wooden poses and mechanical arrangement contains two or three really interesting

Royal Museum, The Hague] [Rembrandt

GROUP OF HEADS FROM ANATOMY LESSON

heads. The picture, however, is made unnecessarily revolting by the treatment of the cadaver, which is opened to show the viscera.

The subject of the Anatomy Lesson was one in great favour with surgeons' guilds, and represented the members gathered about a dissecting-table, ostensibly listening to the professor's demonstration. It was an attempt to supply a story motive for a portrait group. When we turn from Mierevelt's picture to Rembrandt's famous treatment of the same theme, in the year 1632, we can understand the furore which the latter aroused in Amsterdam. Here is genuine dramatic interest as the colleagues bend eagerly over the subject. If their zeal is slightly exaggerated, not so that of Dr. Tulp, the demonstrator, who speaks with the calm deliberation of the scientist. The fine strong personality preserved in this portrait is a type of that class of men whose scholarship made the Dutch universities so famous in the seventeenth century. All the heads are convincing likenesses, and we may well believe that they were gratifying to the originals. The subject, too, is treated in

as good taste as is possible with the unpleasant theme: the muscles of the arm are under discussion. Rembrandt had at this time but recently set up his studio in Amsterdam, having removed thither from his native Leyden. The success of this first important commission augured a brilliant future for the young painter. Happy in his marriage, he now entered upon a busy and fruitful decade of his career.

The military groups were of course the most common of all forms of corporation pictures. To begin with a typical work in the older method, one might take Ravesteyn's masterpiece at The Hague: The Officers of the Civil Guard leaving the Town Hall, painted in 1616. Here the power of good portrait art makes itself felt under the most adverse conditions. The figures are arranged in two tiers, along a balcony and on the ground floor, and are packed solidly together. But here and there, in the huddled rows of faces, one catches a singularly expressive countenance.

It was a bold and delightful innovation

Town Hall, Haarlem] [Frans Hals

GROUP FROM BANQUET OF ST. GEORGE SHOOTING GUILD

(1627)

when Frans Hals produced at nearly the same time, his first great corporation picture, The Banquet of St. George Shooting Guild, at Haarlem. The company are seated about the table, engaged in lively conversation. The motive is so simple and natural that one wonders why it had not been commonly used before. There is really good and sufficient reason here for bringing the company together — one, too, which shows the most agreeable side of the participants. The groups into which they fall are united by standing figures, and the coherence of the linear composition is admirably maintained. But though the artist was bold in breaking away from the old custom of rows, he dared not follow his scheme to its logical conclusion. The perspective indicates considerable depth of space, but the figures in the rear are as sharply defined as those in front. "Values" are set entirely at defiance. The patrons behind the table would have been highly offended to be cast in the shadow by any haze of distance.

It was by this great picture that Frans

Hals suddenly sprang from obscurity to fame. How and where he obtained the necessary practice which must have preceded such craftsmanship, we do not know. He had removed from Antwerp to Haarlem, the home of his ancestors, at the beginning of the century, but nothing is known of him during the first fifteen years of his residence there. Some work, now lost, must have demonstrated his fitness for so important a commission from the St. George Guild. Be this as it may, he is not again lost sight of till his death at a good old age. His next corporation picture belongs to the year 1627, when he again painted the St. George Guild, and also, for the first time the Shooting Guild of St. Adrian. The banquet motive is again employed, but less formally. The men stand or lounge in knots, and some wear their broad-brimmed hats. To avoid false values, such as the picture of 1616 contained, the figures are massed as much as possible in the foreground, and this produces a somewhat crowded and confused effect. Yet these faults are trifles beside the great portrait

work the pictures reveal. One singles out one head after another for special praise. A spirit of good comradeship animates every figure. The passing moment is seized by the artist and crystallized into permanency.

The pictures of 1627 mark the half-way point between the work of 1616 and the masterpiece of 1633, which was a second St. Adrian's group. To keep all the figures well in the foreground, as his patrons demanded, the painter now massed the men in two distinct groups. Yet what the picture lacks in coördination of parts is amply atoned for in the harmonious scheme of colour. It is Fromentin who pronounces the final word upon it as showing "as much taste as Van Dyck, as much skilful execution as Velasquez, with the manifold difficulties of a palette infinitely richer." This was certainly as near as it was possible for mortal man to solve the insoluble problem of the large Dutch corporation picture.

As one reviews these four wonderful pictures by Hals, certain common features come to mind. The decorative element in each

case is furnished by the gaily coloured banners, which are cleverly disposed in oblique lines, to unite groups, and relieve monotonous levels. The ensigns, or standard bearers, are the most conspicuous and picturesque figures of the groups, tricked out with captivating finery, and carrying their standards with a delightful swagger. The commanding officer has of course special prominence, though not always the most commanding personality. He attracts our attention, either by looking directly out of the picture with an air of importance, or by receiving the salute of an ensign. The other characters represent the usual elements of such a company. The argumentative man is here, punctuating his debate with gestures; the tedious story-teller, holding a victim in his toils; the humourist, with his anecdote, and the jolly good fellow, who listens, or laughs, or drinks a toast, as occasion demands.

As if hopeless of again equalling these masterpieces, the next and last military group of Hals shows a decided retrograde. This was the St. George picture of 1639, where the

figures are ranged in a monotonous row as in more primitive work. Even so, the hand of Hals is unmistakable in the vigorous heads and expressive countenances.

The effect of the five great military pictures hanging together in the Haarlem gallery is altogether unique. It is like entering a great banquet hall, full of animation. You are met on all sides by the friendly jovial glances of the revellers. It it as if you heard the clinking of glasses, the sound of voices, and the outbursts of laughter. And although the spirit of hilarity prevails, no unseemly conduct offends the taste.

The methods inaugurated by Hals were not allowed to lapse. Bartholomew van der Helst, a painter of Amsterdam, imbibed deeply the spirit of the Haarlem master. He was a generation younger than Hals, and began his career when the latter was at his height. The gallery at Amsterdam contains two large military groups, of 1639 and 1648, strongly reminiscent of his model. The subject of the second is The Banquet of the Civil Guard celebrating the Peace of West-

phalia, and the arrangement is borrowed from the 1616 Banquet of the St. George Guild in Haarlem. As in the work of Hals, the values of the figures behind the table are somewhat faulty for the very abundance of life which throbs through the whole canvas. Good cheer reigns supreme: the captain grasps the lieutenant by the hand, as he pledges him. The other men fall to with jest and anecdote. In the center, somewhat apart, sits the magnificent being who fills the office of ensign. The giant throws one leg over the other, steadies the great flag over his shoulder, and complacently meets the gaze of an admiring audience. In his own opinion at least he is the whole show.

In the meantime Rembrandt had contributed to the great military groups of the period his famous picture of the Night Watch. This was painted in 1642 for the Amsterdam Musketeers, under the captaincy of Frans Banning Cocq. The painter's object was to make a natural dramatic motive the basis of the work. The guard issues from their assembly-hall in some sudden call to action.

The captain leads the way, giving orders to his lieutenant. The drum beats, the ensign unfurls the standard, the men come out with musket and lance; a dog scampers under foot, and a little girl slips into the crowd. All is confusion and action. In such a scene it would be impossible to give every figure full portrait value. Some of the figures necessarily occupy insignificant positions in the background. This was very humiliating to the Musketeers. They preferred the old-fashioned ways to such startling innovations. They paid their money for good portraits, not for a dramatic composition. Popular sympathy was with the grumblers. The picture was in fact quite beyond the average comprehension. Rembrandt had used the opportunity to work out some problems of chiaroscuro which were struggling in his mind. Absorbed in the wonderful contrasts of light and shadow, he was careless of all else. He produced one of the world's greatest pictures but he disappointed his patrons. The captain and lieutenant are the only satisfactory portrait figures in the company.

In the following century the picture was removed to the Town Hall, and in order to fit it to a particular place, a strip was cut from each end of the canvas. The result is a crowded effect not belonging to its original condition. In the passing years the accumulation of smoke darkened the colour, until it was supposed to represent a night scene. Hence the incorrect title of the Night Watch. Since the canvas was cleaned in 1889, it is seen clearly as a daylight incident, and the proper title is the Sortie of the Civic Guard. The unpopularity of the picture had a serious effect upon Rembrandt's professional interests, and brought to an end the first and happiest period of his career.

Beside the large Dutch military compositions the smaller corporation groups of four or five figures make a much more amenable subject of painting. The participants usually gather about a table as if for discussion of business. They represent official governing boards, both of men and women. It is indeed a surprise to find that women took so important a place in these days in the management

of hospitals and charity organizations. What sensible and capable characters they were, we see in many of these pictures. They take their duties seriously, conscious of the importance of their trust. Naturally they are women in middle life, or somewhat elderly, the solid matronly figures of the Dutch middle class. Their black dresses, with ample skirts, and their stiff white ruffs and quaint caps make the material for a sober and dignified colour scheme. There are very interesting examples of such works in Amsterdam and Haarlem by men of secondary importance, like Jacob Backer, Joannes Verspronck, Werner van Valckert, and Dirck Santvoort, men whose names are so little known to-day, yet who contributed a worthy quota to the splendid body of seventeenth-century Dutch art.

A typical male group of this class is Pickenoy's Regents of the House of Correction, a picture of 1628 in the Amsterdam gallery. The appearance of the beadle with a letter is the excuse for a pause in the proceedings, all four regents looking directly out

of the picture. The work is admirably conceived, but it has the stiffness of an immature hand. Comparing with it the Regents of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, by Hals, painted in 1641, we see what the free hand of a consummate technician could make of such a theme. Each face is as animated and expressive as if actually speaking. Over twenty years later Hals painted two more small corporation groups, one of men, and one of women, but his hand had now lost its cunning. The brush once so bold had become incoherent, and there is much pathos in these signs of decadence. It was left to Rembrandt to achieve the perfect corporation picture in the Syndics of the Cloth Guild of 1661. Nearly thirty years had passed since the Night Watch had occasioned so much disappointment, but in this work he vindicated himself in the popular esteem. The picture is a miracle of infusing life into the dry bones of a traditional composition. The Syndics appear to be interrupted by the arrival of a newcomer, and they all look up with a common impulse. Every quality of

greatness in a portrait group is here: fine characterization of the individual heads, hands, and pose; unity and flow of line in the linear composition; harmony of rich colour; and a unity of interest, with a single idea dominating the entire group. With this picture then we touch the climax in the development of a form of portrait art which was the peculiar product of the period, a characteristic expression of the Dutch genius.

CHAPTER XI

FRANS HALS AND REMBRANDT

THERE is an old Dutch custom, holding even to this day, of fastening to the window a mirror, set at an angle which reflects to the occupant of the room the figures of the passers-by. Had Hals and Rembrandt set up such mirrors in their studio windows, at Haarlem and Amsterdam, in the middle of the seventeenth century, fixing the reflections by some magic process, the result would have been something like the series of portraits they produced. For it was in the life of the people that make up the daily throng of the street, that they were most at home. They were men of the people, and it was for the people that they wrought — the sturdy middle class who furnish brain and brawn (and money, too!) to the nation. Among their sitters to

be sure were men of learning, letters and science, like Hoornebeek, professor in the University of Leyden (Hals); Doctor Tulp and Doctor Tholinx of Amsterdam (Rembrandt) and Herman Krul, the poet (Rembrandt). There were ministers, too, like Rembrandt's Anslo, and Hals' Johannes Acronius, and minor artists like Berchem (Rembrandt) and Van der Vinne (Hals). There was even an occasional admiral, this with Hals, or a burgomaster, with Rembrandt, but this is as high as the scale reaches. No noblemen are identified among them, and it is needless to add, no princes or crowned heads. For the most part they were merchants or burghers and their wives, like Rembrandt's Shipbuilder, and Hals' Nicolas Beresteyn, the majority indeed being of too little consequence for their names to have been preserved. A foreigner is a rarity, a single notable exception being Descartes, whom Hals painted during the French philosopher's sojourn in Amsterdam. Altogether the united product of the two men presents a striking contrast to that of their

Flemish contemporaries, Rubens and Van Dyck — this commonplace company of middle class Dutch with that brilliant panorama of the court life of every country in Europe. The course of their lives was correspondingly diverse, and beside the constant journeyings of the two great Flemings, the tranquil provincial routine of the two Dutchmen affords almost no material for the biographer. Nor do the contemporaries of Rembrandt and Hals appear to have had much insight into their characters. While Rubens and Van Dyck are clearly defined personalities, the two great Dutchmen are rather vague and shadowy figures. Something of their character we may gather from their portraits.

Our best known portrait of Hals is the Amsterdam picture of himself and his second wife in a landscape group, after the manner of Rubens and Isabella Brandt.[1] The Dutch painter is a handsome man with large well cut features, and he has the "open countenance" which we like to associate with the Dutch character. He has evidently just

[1] See page 138.

cracked a joke, and throws himself back for a hearty laugh, while his wife joins good-naturedly in his merriment. A jolly good fellow this with a simple kindly nature, whom we should not suspect of being very profound. There is little or nothing in the face to indicate the artistic nature which is so apparent in the refined and imaginative likenesses of Rubens and Van Dyck. Hals is indeed reputed to have been a man of convivial habits, and a frequenter of taverns. Worse still, he was once brought into court for wife-beating. Yet after the death of this unfortunate first wife, Lysbeth Reyniers was not afraid to make the venture as his second, and in this picture appears to find her husband a very agreeable companion. They lived together nearly fifty years, and had a large family.

The portraits of Rembrandt extend over a period of forty years. No other face has been so many times represented in art, not even that of Charles I or Philip IV.[1] There

[1] An exception is the case of Bismarck whom Lenbach painted over a hundred times. See page 278.

are fifty painted portraits, or one sixth of his entire portrait output, and twenty-seven etchings besides. The majority were made merely for practice, and not from any motives of vanity. The painter took no pains to show himself to advantage, and often made himself quite grotesque, forcing a laugh or a grimace for the study of facial expression. The portraits came most thickly during the early years of his professional life, when there was most need of technical training. For instance there are ten etchings in the year 1630, and seven in 1631, and a dozen or so painted portraits for the years 1634-1635. Nearly all these early studies are in costume, and deal with the reflection of light on velvet stuffs and metals. The painter was especially interested in the shadows cast on the face by the brim of a head covering. So we see him wearing every conceivable form of headdress — the soft velvet cap, the wide-brimmed hat, these often with plume or feather, the tall fur cap, the turban, and the helmet. Among all these fantastically dressed figures we search in vain for Rembrandt as

Cassel Gallery] [Rembrandt

PORTRAIT OF REMBRANDT IN COSTUME

his neighbours saw him, Rembrandt as he walked the streets of Amsterdam. These studio trappings are strangely at variance with the sober black clothes with stiff ruffs or broad flat collars, and the Puritan hat, which were in vogue at that time. How Rembrandt would look in the regulation Dutch attire, such as was worn by the surgeons of the Anatomy Lesson and the Syndics, is left to our imagination. The artist's face is cast in a large plebeian mould with irregular features and rather small eyes. He was not overcareful to reproduce the features accurately, so that we do not always recognize him in his various disguises. He also varied constantly the treatment of hair and beard so that we are still in the dark as to whether Rembrandt's own hair was long or short, scanty or abundant, bushy, curly or straight. We feel reasonably sure that he was a kindly and candid person and possessed of a somewhat independent spirit, with a proper opinion of his own merits. Yet who could find in his face the indications of a visionary? The keen observing eye of the

artist is, however, now and then apparent, as in one of the Louvre portraits (with head uncovered). He is almost always very serious, except when forcing a laugh for strictly professional purposes. Apparently he was quite the opposite of the light hearted Hals. The most satisfactory portraits are from his youth and his old age. At Fenway Court, Boston, is a most delightful portrait of the young artist on the threshold of his career. There is an irresistible charm in the frank, ingenuous face looking out so hopefully upon life. The face is delicately shaded by a picturesque plumed hat, the work showing even in this early period the magic touch which was to characterize the master. Many years later we see him again, stripped of studio finery, wrapping his mantle about him, as he turns his weary old face to ours, and shows us in his careworn expression something of the conflicts of a life of profound experience.

The fame of Rembrandt's wife Saskia is second only to that of Helena Fourment in the annals of artists' biography. He was married in 1632 at the beginning of his career

in Amsterdam, and for ten happy years this amiable girl was the light of his home. There are many pictures to show the artist's delight in his bride. She was no such beauty as Rubens's Helena, with a round blunt nose and small eyes; but she had the charm of youth and a pleasant, cheerful smile. It was indeed chiefly as a model that Rembrandt painted her, using her face, as he used his own, for the perfecting of his skill, rather than for the proper purposes of portraiture. The most attractive picture is the betrothal portrait of the Cassel gallery, where the flower in her hand is the symbol of her happy love. The artist has loaded her with jewels, strings of pearls about her arms and neck, and in her hair. A rich velvet dress is worn over an embroidered guimpe, and a fur mantle falls over one shoulder. A broad brimmed hat with long feather completes the fanciful costume. In such fashion the painter continued to array her, paying much more attention to picturesque and decorative effects than to the expressiveness of the face. In fact it is difficult in some cases to distinguish

the portraits of Saskia from those of Rembrandt's sister. In the Dresden gallery is the well known group in which Saskia is seen sitting on her husband's knee, while he raises his glass for a toast. The composition is not very felicitous, and Saskia looks more like a doll than a live woman, but the work is a pleasant record of a happy mood in a life clouded with troubles. The spirit of the picture is really more like Hals than Rembrandt. Now and again Rembrandt caught the picturesque swagger which is the special charm of Hals, and vice versa, Hals achieved the serious dignity which was Rembrandt's forte. There are not a few cases where the two painters meet on common ground, as in their corporation pictures of the Regents and the Syndics. Nowhere perhaps do they come more closely together than in two portraits of old women in the Amsterdam gallery: the lady of the Van der Meer family, by Hals, and Elizabeth Bas, by Rembrandt. Worthy compeers are these two, posed so similarly in arm-chairs, rendered with like fidelity of detail, with like power of individual characteri-

zation, treated with equal dignity and refinement.

A field in which Hals was unapproached was in studies of genre life. Loitering about the market and taverns, he loved to watch the happy-go-lucky lives of the common people. Hille Bobbe, the fish-wife of Haarlem, was a favourite model, a toothless old hag, reputed to be a witch. Her fish-stand was a gathering place for idlers who delighted in bandying jokes with her. Hals liked nothing better than to loosen her sharp tongue with a tankard of ale, and, when the climax of the tale was reached, sketch the grotesque old face so contorted with merriment that one can fairly hear the old beldame's shrill cackle of laughter. The itinerant musician was another hobby of Hals. One recalls the flute player of Schwerin, grinning at us in a pause between notes, the lute player of Amsterdam making eyes at some imaginary siren in mocking imitation of a cavalier; the two touching little fellows with a mandolin, in the Cassel gallery, and the pretty boy singer of Berlin.

Another street study is the charming Bohemienne, of the Louvre, with her sly sidelong glance, from beneath her half closed eyes. The Jolly Man, at Amsterdam, and the Young Man with Slouch Hat, at Cassel, with the maudlin toper in the same gallery, are familiar examples of the hilarious mood which Hals knew so well how to represent. Such heads have many counterparts in the large military groups. Spontaneous hilarity like this was quite foreign to the nature of Rembrandt, though he might sometimes try to simulate it. Instead of the jovial tavern loungers of Hals, he took by preference some Jewish beggar and transformed him into a wistful philosopher, a melancholy exile, or a meditative apostle, whose yearning eyes reveal the pathos of a lonely soul.

Hals was a wizard in catching an expression as elusive as thought. The portrait of the Wallace collection, so inaptly called the "Laughing Cavalier," is a fascinating study in the dawning of a smile. The Smoker of the Metropolitan Museum is catching our eye to share the little joke which has set his com-

Louvre, Paris] [Frans Hals

THE BOHEMIAN GIRL

panion to laughing. The unknown gentleman of Frankfort has just the suspicion of a kindly twinkle in his eyes, and the pompous admiral of St. Petersburg is about to utter a pleasant repartee. The irresistible Ilpenstein baby is unmatched in child portraiture. The round little face is fairly rippling with laughter. A long range is thus illustrated in the work of Hals, from the coarse jest and shrill laughter of the old witch Hille Bobbe, and the noisy hilarity of the tavern brawler or soldier, to the bubbling merriment of an innocent baby.

The born humourist has always much to suffer from those who refuse to take him seriously. Hals excelled so strikingly in the delineation of jovial types that many are unaware of the number and merit of his more dignified portraits. Some of these are especially strong in decorative quality. The full-length portrait of Willem van Huythuysen in the Lichenstein gallery at Vienna is quite wonderful in this respect. The brocade dress is rendered with great effect. As in Baby Ilpenstein's dress Hals took his opportunities

to exercise consummate craftsmanship in rich stuffs and delicate laces. The companion portraits of Jacob Olycan and his wife at The Hague mark the high water mark of dignity and expressiveness combined with decorative beauty.

Men and women of all ages make up the full complement of the long portrait list of Rembrandt. Children are rather rare and are not among the successes. They are usually too grave for their years. Youth did not appeal strongly to the painter. Even his beloved wife did not inspire his highest effort. Superficial prettiness did not interest him so much as character significance. In this he shared the spirit of the early painters of Northern Europe, though differing from them so widely in his methods. For character and expressiveness of countenance there must needs be experience and age. So the favourite subjects of Rembrandt were strong men of middle age, and old people of both sexes.

An extraordinary performance for a young man of twenty-five is the Shipbuilder and his Wife (1633) painted with such insight into

Wallace Collection, London] [Frans Hals

THE LAUGHING CAVALIER

the sterling worth of the homely old couple. The man turns about from his table to receive the letter his wife brings him. Simple as the act is, both faces show that years of tender devotion have knit the two together in perfect understanding. It is also in these early years that Rembrandt painted the several portraits of his father and mother which have given us a better understanding of his parentage than of his own individuality. What resoluteness of character is indicated in the mother's large mouth, with the thin lips tightly compressed. A proud self-contained nature is here, with grave eyes, small and keen rather than poetic. She is a dignified and handsome woman whom we must all greatly respect.

The portrait at Windsor, and the etching of the seated figure show us all this. The studio pieces in the character of St. Anna, and the like, are not satisfying as portrait studies. Extreme old age softens somewhat the natural austerity of the mother's character, and when we see her bent with years, leaning on her cane (Vienna), though dressed in

velvet and satin finery, as if to conceal her feebleness, the withered face smiles with child like pleasure.

Rembrandt's father is not of so stern a fibre. A plain, hard working miller, but with the large eyes of a visionary. There is no little pathos in the face, as of one in whom fact and fancy were often in conflict. The portrait with the skull cap, at Cassel, is one of several examples, and the portrait of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is another.

One after another the old people of Rembrandt's portraits rise before the imagination, the women mostly in quaint starched headdresses, with big ear pieces, the men in skull caps. In each face we discern a distinctive personality. From the complacency of Elizabeth Bas, energetic and authoritative, but not unkindly, we turn to the gentle, almost deprecating smile of an old lady in St. Petersburg, and from her again to the animated young old lady of Captain Holford's collection (1645), turning her face so alertly to the right that she seems about to speak. A very unusual old lady is that of Mr. Havemeyer's

Hermitage, St. Petersburg] [Rembrandt

PORTRAIT OF AN OLD WOMAN

New York collection (1640), eighty-seven years old, according to the inscription. The face is exquisitely refined and the mouth of exceeding sweetness. The deep eye sockets, and the depression of the temples are beautifully rendered. The old lady of the National Gallery is eighty-three, and she, too, has held her own well through the years. Her face, looking directly out of the canvas, is a perfect net-work of wrinkles. She looks down reflectively, with an amiable smile. A favourite model of Rembrandt was an old family dependent whose portraits have often erroneously been called "Rembrandt's Mother."[1] She was of peasant origin, with large hands knotted with hard work, but in her prime she must have been a handsome woman. She was a patient old soul, who had passed through many sorrows, but had borne them with a sweetness which has made the mouth beautiful, and the eyes very tender and expressive. Between this Mother of Sorrows

[1] Michel (vol. ii, p. 77, of Rembrandt) refers to five studies of this model. The writer has specially in mind here the picture in St. Petersburg.

and the Witch of Haarlem, what a gulf of experience.

Among Rembrandt's portraits of elderly men that of Jan Six easily leads. (Six Collection, Amsterdam.) It was the crowning proof of a long friendship between the two men which seems to have originated in their common passion for collecting works of art. The Six family had a country-seat at Elsbroek, near Amsterdam, and thither in 1641 Rembrandt had been summoned to paint the mother's portrait. From thenceforth he had frequent intercourse with the son Jan. Young Six was a lover of literature, as well as of art, and something of a poet beside. In an etched portrait by Rembrandt we see him in the days of his literary activity. He leans against a window-ledge in his library, poring over a folio volume. The dreamy countenance, the graceful figure, the absorbed attitude, and the stately room, make this one of the most fascinating of Rembrandt's portrait etchings. It was at about this time that the young poet published his tragedy of Medea which Rembrandt illustrated with a

magnificent etching. Literary work led the way to various public honours until at last Six became Burgomaster of Amsterdam. How the passing years had dealt with him we may see in the great portrait. We recognize at once the delicate high bred features of the etching; but the rapt face of the young poet is now graven with the deeper experiences of life. It is a most gentle and noble countenance of a French type, the Sixes having been Huguenots, who took refuge in Holland in the sixteenth century. The burgomaster stands drawing on his gloves, wearing a hat and a rich cloak, as if going abroad. The gracious inclination of the fine head, and the entire ease of the figure express perfect distinction. Among the etched portraits of old men more homely types come to mind: Jan Lutma, the goldsmith, settled comfortably in his arm chair with the complacent ease of hard-won success; Sylvius, the preacher, weighing some theological dogmas; Clement de Jonghe, the publisher, with the astute air of the connoisseur; the venerable "old Haa-

ring," official of the bankruptcy court, benevolent and serene.

Our study of these characteristic portrait examples of Hals and Rembrandt gives us the basis of a comparison between the two painters. Rembrandt was of course a much bigger man, as Rubens was bigger than Van Dyck. An engraver as well as a painter, and an all around artist, as well as a maker of portraits, he looms far above Hals who was exclusively a portrait painter. In Rembrandt's sixty-three years of industry he produced much more work than the more indolent Hals in his long life of eighty odd years. But in the matter of portrait painting the two rank together as the highest exponents of their school. Living in a period which was notable for many excellent portrait painters, contemporaries of Mierevelt, of Moreelse, of Ravesteyn, of Metsu, and of Gerard Dou, they stand head and shoulders above all the great company. They had several characteristics in common which belong more or less to their period. Their closest similarity was perhaps in the sense of intimacy which both

imparted to their subjects, each in his own way. There is with them none of that averted gaze and distant air which Van Dyck gave his sitters. Their portrait folk look us directly in the face, and give us their confidence. They are all thoroughly alive.

In their points of divergence they supplemented each other in realizing a full expression of the spirit of the seventeenth-century Dutch art. Their style of craftsmanship is quite dissimilar. We recognize Hals by the bold brush-work which often makes a picture quite unintelligible at close range. Rembrandt we distinguish by his wonderful contrasts of light and shade. Often the definition of a face or figure is quite lost in the shadow. In palette, too, the two men differ characteristically. Hals began with a wide range of colours and ended practically in monochromy, with the severest limits of black and white. Rembrandt from colder colour grew warmer with the years, and at length his canvases took on those golden or tawny browns, like nothing so much as the varying tints of amber. Hals painted his figures by

daylight, the illumination evenly distributed, Rembrandt saw things in a "light which never was on land or sea." Without overlooking the many exceptions which in each case prove the rule, the general tendency of the two men lay in opposite directions. Hals represented the material side of life, Rembrandt the ideal. Hals stuck to facts, Rembrandt was a poet. Hals saw the fun of life, Rembrandt, its pathos. Hals caught the play of the passing emotion, the smile, the jest, the transient mood, Rembrandt penetrated the deeps of character and represented the abiding values of the human soul.

CHAPTER XII

THREE CENTURIES OF FRENCH PORTRAIT PAINTING

WITH the accession of Francis I in 1516 the art of painting first came into prominent recognition in France. Travel in Italy had first opened the king's eyes to the splendour of art, and he had besides no mind to be outdone by the Emperor Charles V in the patronage of artistic talent. He invited several Italian painters to his court, including, among lesser men, the Florentine Andrea del Sarto, and the great Leonardo da Vinci. Some of these remained many years, and Leonardo passed his last days there, expiring, as tradition has it, in the arms of his royal friend. This group of Italian painters founded the so-called school of Fontainebleau.

It was probably early in his reign that

Francis discovered the merits of a certain Jean Clouet, a Fleming then living in Tours. The king kept him busy till his death in 1539, when the court patronage was transferred to the son François Clouet. Royal favour made the Clouets and their school famous. Their work was almost exclusively in portraiture, both in drawing and painting. In Italy, as we have seen, portrait painting had to free itself gradually from religious composition, of which it was first merely an accessory. In France, on the other hand, portraiture was the first form which painting assumed, since it was the court, not the church, which gave it the original impulse.

The excellence of the Clouets seems the more remarkable when we realize that only half a century of native art lay back of them. Fouquet had been the real founder of French painting. He had made enough of a name to attract the attention of the Pope Eugene IV who, as if there were not better men at home, had called him to Rome in 1440, to paint his portrait. The French painter had lingered five years in Italy, drawing inspira-

tion from its art atmosphere, then returned to France to make the beginnings of a French school. The Clouets were the heirs of his efforts, and brought French portrait painting at a single bound into a position of dignity.

The respective characteristics of father and son are difficult to distinguish, and the problem is complicated by the variety of names applied indifferently to each: Jean, Jehan, Jehannet, Jeannet, and Janet. Both Clouets were accomplished draughtsmen, but while the elder made rapid and spirited sketches, intended merely as studies, the younger carefully elaborated his drawings as finished works. The National Library at Paris contains several hundreds of these precious drawings, and there are other collections in private ownership. The Clouet paintings are most numerous at Chantilly, and in the English royal galleries at Windsor and Hampton Court. François outlived King Francis and continued in office under Henry II, until his death in 1572. Contemporary poets vied with one another in extolling his gifts, and Ron-

sard employed him to paint an ideal portrait of his lady-love.

Many French celebrities of three reigns appear in the portraits of the Clouets and their school: Francis I with his long, crooked nose, small eyes and sinister expression; Eleanor, his queen; Catherine de' Medici, dangerously innocent looking, concealing her iron will under an amiable smile; Charles IX (at Vienna and in the Louvre) in doublet and hose, with a rich cape and a plumed cap, graceful and princely; the nice little Elizabeth of Austria, his wife, with her smooth hair and pretty high necked dress; the Duc d'Alençon, looking rather weak and effeminate, but charmingly dressed; Henry II, sombre and heavy; Mary Stuart, the beautiful English princess, in her unhappy young widowhood.

The Clouets had a great reputation for the likeness, and one must believe that contemporary judgment was right in this matter. There is a sincerity in their work which is thoroughly convincing. They seemed altogether free from the court painter's common

Louvre, Paris] [Clouet

PORTRAIT OF ELIZABETH OF AUSTRIA

fault of flattery. Perhaps their Flemish blood counted for something in this respect, modified by the French influence. Their work shows strong kinship with Holbein in frank realism and careful finish. Often there is genuine psychological insight in the portraits and sometimes a peculiar charm of intimacy.

The seventeenth century was not without abundant products of portrait art in France, but the quality was decidedly inferior to the quantity. While Spain and the Netherlands were uniting to make this the golden age of portraiture, their great names have no worthy French compeers. The stamp of Louis Quatorze was upon the art as upon the manners of the time.

The spectacular, the ostentatious, the artificial were the preferred qualities. The simple and the natural were far to seek. The character of the art was dominated by Lebrun, founder and director of the Academy, and the exponent of the pompous and the theatrical. The making or marring of an artist lay with him. Little did he dream that

future generations would set his dreary historical compositions below the portrait work of the men to whom he condescended.

A few whose portrait works are worth mentioning are Simon Vouet, who painted Louis XIII and all the nobles of his court; the brothers Le Nain, a number of whose portraits are in England, and Santerre, whose *chef d'œuvre* is said to be the portrait of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and who might have gone on painting beautiful women, had he not been annoyed by the *bêtises* of his sitters. Others with whom portrait painting was the chief occupation were Mignard, Largilliere, and Rigaud.

The name Mignard, French for exquisite, had come to the family in exchange for the original name of More, from a compliment paid to the father and uncles of the painter by Henry IV. Seeing the group of young men, — all officers in the royal army, — the king exclaimed, "Those are not Mores (Moors), but Mignards." The name became particularly appropriate to the character of the painter's work, which was smooth and

graceful, with some affectation. His pictures of the Madonna were known as "*mignardes*," and the verb "*mignardiser*" was concocted from the name.

Mignard spent over twenty years of his life in Rome, where he painted the portrait of many distinguished persons, including three popes. At length he was recalled to France by Louis XIV who bestowed commissions and honours upon him. Ten times he painted the portrait of the Grand Monarque. The first of these pictures was dashed off in three hours and was sent to the Spanish princess whom the king was to marry. The most conspicuous is the great picture at Versailles, hanging over the mantelpiece of the Salon d'Hercule. It represents the king in armour on horseback, crowned by victory, after the conquest of Maestricht.

Mignard's studio became a fashionable resort for great ladies whose portraits he painted with pleasing flattery. He had no mean opinion of his own ability, and once when there was question of his leaving France, he remarked, "With these five fingers, there is

no country in Europe where I shall not be more considered, and cannot make a greater fortune than in France."

Largilliere passed his youth in Flanders, where he received his artistic training from Flemish painters. He was twice in England where he was in great favour with Charles II and James II. Returning at length to France he entered the Academy by a portrait of Lebrun. Thereafter he continued to devote himself to portrait work, and his patrons included many members of the royal family. Fine examples of his work are in the Louvre, at Versailles, and Chantilly. He was especially successful with women's portraits, imparting grace and dignity to his sitters. His colour is rich and harmonious.

A warm friendship existed between Largilliere and Rigaud, their talents being too dissimilar for rivalry. Rigaud disliked to paint women's portraits as much as Largilliere enjoyed it. "If I make a true likeness of a woman," he said, "it is often unsatisfactory to the sitter, because not beautiful; and if beautiful, it is not satisfactory to me, because

not true." He was an extremely prolific painter, producing thirty or forty portraits a year. His industry reminds one of the English Reynolds. He has been called the Van Dyck of France, and did indeed draw inspiration from the Flemish master, like him imparting dignity and gravity to his subjects. Five kings were among his patrons, and many other notables. His portrait of Louis XIV is considered the official historical portrait of the Grand Monarque. The king wears an ample drapery of ermine-lined velvet, thrown back to show his figure dressed in small-clothes and close-fitting hose. The huge curled wig is his crowning touch of magnificence, and in attitude and bearing his pompous character is perfectly expressed. The picture has been justly called "a page of history, the history of the man, the artist and the period." The engraved works of Rigaud include two hundred portraits. Ranking just below Rigaud and Largilliere was François de Troy, a protégé of Madame de Pompadour, who painted portraits of ladies in the guise of goddesses.

Before leaving the group of seventeenth century painters the name of Philippe de Champaigne should be briefly mentioned as one that is claimed in French art. Champaigne was, however, of Flemish origin, and did not come to Paris till he was nineteen years of age. He was among the foremost portrait painters of the period, and the Louvre contains over twenty of his portraits. A famous one is the three-fold likeness of Richelieu, in front view and both profiles. All his works have the Flemish character of seriousness and noble expressiveness. It is more logical to group him with his countrymen, Rubens and Van Dyck, than with such men as Rigaud and Largilliere. But the French historian, anxious to make his tale as complete as possible, includes all foreigners who ever sojourned in Paris, and omits no natives who sojourned in foreign lands.

There was no sharp transition between the French art of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Largilliere and Rigaud lived well into the reign of Louis Quinze, and carried over the artificial spirit with them. Their

successors were quite as full of mannerisms, but with this difference: that what was pompous and stilted in the seventeenth century became pretty and insipid in the eighteenth. Force and virility were equally lacking in both periods. If the note of the Louis Quatorze art was set by Lebrun, that of Louis Quinze was given by Watteau. In portrait art Largilliere and Rigaud were succeeded by Nattier and Greuze.

In his youth Nattier was a zealous copyist of the so-called great masters. A drawing he had made of Rigaud's celebrated portrait of Louis XIV came to the attention of the king, who remarked: "Monsieur, continue to work thus and you will become a great man." Nattier obeyed injunctions, and if not a great man according to the broadest standards, attained great fame in his own world. His first important work was in 1715 for Peter the Great, Czar of Russia. Summoned to Amsterdam to meet the monarch, he then and there made a series of portraits of important personages of the Russian court, culminating in a picture of the battle of Pultowa, with

the czar as the hero. All this work giving immense satisfaction, the painter was next sent to The Hague to paint the Empress Catherine, where again he made a great hit. Before the portrait was finished, his royal patroness praised it so highly that the impatient czar ordered the unfinished canvas brought to him in Paris where it was set on the throne of the banquet room at a great entertainment. Nattier, however, positively declined an invitation to the court of Russia, at which the czar was so incensed that he countermanded all orders then under way, and Catherine's portrait was never completed.

It was some years later when Nattier's portrait work first attracted the attention of Louis XV's queen, Marie Leczinska. In the following years he went through the entire royal family, painting every member, the king, the queen, the dauphin, and Mesdames the several daughters, in all the most beautiful and creditable group of his entire portrait output. The queen herself is the most distinguished of this royal company. She was not considered at all beautiful, but Nattier has

Wallace Collection, London] [Nattier

PORTRAIT OF LADY IN BLUE

imparted to her a graciousness and charm which are more than beauty. She is seated on a sofa, the lustrous folds of her rich dress spread about her, and a picturesque lace bonnet framing her face.

The patrons of Nattier liked to believe that their portraits were excellent likenesses. To-day, however, the wonder is that so many ladies could look so precisely alike. The type of face is as fixed as that of Perugino's saints, with the same oval outline, the round sparkling eyes, arched brows, and small perfect mouth. The prevailing fashions accentuate the sameness. Every lady has powdered hair, slightly waved, drawn back closely from the face, rouged cheeks, spotted with court-plaster patches, and a decolleté gown, with a long stiff corset. There is something very attractive in this pretty, smiling being, in spite of her mannerism. The painter's touch is light, his colour often brilliant and harmonious, his decorative sense fine. For subtlety, characterization, and distinction, we must accept from him grace, and charm, and refinement. Whether it is a seated figure, like Madame

Elizabeth and Madame Henriette, the twins who were eldest of the royal daughters, or half-lengths, like Madame Sophie and Madame Louise, the portrait is first of all a "picture." Many of Nattier's sitters affected the rôles of Greek divinities. Hebe, Diana, and Flora, and the Vestal virgins are among these lovely disguises. The same custom prevailed in English portrait painting in this century.[1] There is indeed a close affiliation between Nattier and his English contemporaries in his gift for idealizing womanly beauty. For the rest he is too distinctly and typically French to be compared with the English.

Greuze was not preëminently a portrait painter, but there are thirty-five portraits among the one hundred and twenty-five works of his scattered through the European galleries. In addition there are over thirty heads of young girls painted as fancy subjects, a kind of picture which had a great vogue. For twenty-five years he was the fashionable painter in Paris. He was made

[1] See page 257.

painter to the king, and his studio was visited by all the foreign princes coming to Paris. His style had the prettiness and sentimentality which calls forth the admiration of the superficial. Of his own special invention were his story pictures of French village life, rendered in a sort of operatic version. The popularity of these works was so great that his contemporaries did not realize that he was at his best and strongest in portraits. In the delineation of young women and girls he was too apt to suggest coquetry and allurement with an affected innocence, where no innocence was. So in his well-known portrait of the beautiful actress, Sophie Arnould, the character of the sitter is almost too obvious, as she surveys her admirer with a lazy but seductive witchery. No such element enters into English portraits of actresses. Occasionally the painter forgot himself so far as to paint a child with exquisite naturalness and charm, like the little girl with an apple, leaning on a window ledge, in the National Gallery. Among his celebrated portrait subjects are Madame de Pom-

padour, Louis XVI, and Napoleon as first consul.

Greuze had an extraordinary opinion of his own ability. Pointing to his own works, he would say, "It is perfectly incomprehensible to me how with merely a few bits of pounded earth, a man can put so much life into a canvas. Really if these were the days of mythology, I should fear the fate of Prometheus." His self-esteem drew an ironical reproof from the painter Vernet, who told him he had one enemy who would ruin him, even though he loved him to distraction. "And who is that?" asked the painter, innocently. "Yourself," was the reply. The painter outlived his vogue, and had a neglected and lonely old age lasting a few years into the new century.

Madame Vigée Le Brun's eighty-seven years were nearly divided between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Her career began early in life, and at fifteen she was contributing to the family support by painting portraits. Her beauty and vivacity were no little help in her profession, and she soon had

plenty of patronage from admiring young men. Such patrons she cleverly posed with eyes focussed in another direction than her easel. If the sitter's glances strayed towards the fair artist, she would call him to task by announcing: "Now I am doing the eyes." Her charm of manner lasted all through life, and made her a host of friends in the highest circles. At a meeting of the French Academy La Harpe paid her an extravagant tribute which brought forth the applause of the whole audience. Her most characteristic work belongs to the early half of her life, when she was the favourite of Queen Marie Antoinette. After the Revolution she travelled extensively in Italy and Germany, lived a long time in St. Petersburg, visited London, where she met Reynolds, and finally returned to Paris under Napoleon, where she died in 1842.

Beginning in her girlhood by copying heads of Greuze, she always followed the tradition of Watteau, Fragonard, and Nattier, but with more simplicity and sincerity. She was indefatigably industrious, and was always too busy for self-improvement. Nevertheless her

pictures have the characteristic charm of her nationality: delicacy, grace, and sentiment. She was particularly felicitous in pose and grouping.

Madame Le Brun's portraits of Marie Antoinette have done as much to keep fresh the memory of the unfortunate queen as Van Dyck's of Charles I did for that monarch. There were between thirty and forty of these pictures, a goodly number of which are still at Versailles. The queen was far from beautiful, but the painter understood the art of flattery as well as her contemporaries. She made her royal patroness a pretty doll-like creature, carrying her head magnificently as a queen should. The rich dresses, the high, powdered coiffure, crowned with the big hats set aslant, as with the English ladies of Gainsborough's canvases, are charming additions. A beautiful composition is the Queen seated with her three children, the young dauphin, the eldest daughter, Madame Royale, and the infant Duc de Normandie.

After Marie Antoinette, Madame Le Brun was her own most interesting sitter. She often

Bologna Gallery] [Madame Vigée Le Brun

PORTRAIT OF MADAME LE BRUN'S DAUGHTER

painted her own portrait, now in a plumed hat with rolling brim jauntily set back upon her curls, now in a broad-brimmed hat shading her face, à la Rubens' "Chapeau de Poil," now in a white kerchief knotted about her head, now in a turban, seated at her easel, now in a Greek costume, embracing her little daughter. Always she is vivacious and apparently happy, looking out on life with a splendid courage which triumphs over the troubles of a disappointed life. She was unhappy in her marriage and in the relations with her adored daughter; but through all the vicissitudes of a strange life she clung bravely to her art. By her own count she painted six hundred and sixty-two portraits, and if the work is neither strong nor great, it did her honour. As her biographer has said, "She is one of the most *aimable* painters of the French school."

Much of the French art of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was ephemeral. The product of an artificial spirit, it does not interest a more thoughtful generation. It is on the whole the portrait work which has the

most permanent value. This is the most sincere and vital in intention. Lacking the noble elements of some other schools, it yet holds its own for qualities of external beauty which will never cease to charm.

CHAPTER XIII

VELASQUEZ AT THE COURT OF PHILIP IV

NEARLY all that makes for the glory of Spanish history was compressed within the two hundred years between the late fifteenth and late seventeenth centuries. Spain was now at her height, in political supremacy, in commercial prosperity, and in the rise of literature and painting. The Emperor Charles V gave a strong impetus to art by his liberal patronage, both of religious and portrait subjects. How highly he valued the work of Titian, we have already seen.[1] The splendid canvases of the Venetian which were brought to Madrid, were in themselves a school of art for native painters. About 1550, the emperor began to employ the Netherlandish painter, Anthony Moro. This artist was first sent to Lisbon

[1] See page 64.

to paint the betrothed wife of Philip, and afterwards to England to paint his second wife, Queen Mary.[1] Returning later to Spain, he was here long enough to exercise a decided influence on contemporary artists. As we see in his celebrated portrait of Queen Mary, he had in remarkable degree the Netherlandish gift of expressive realism.[2] His best Spanish pupil was Sanchez Coello, who painted the portraits of Philip II and Philip III, and various members of the house of Austria. Coello's best pupil, in turn, was Pantoja de la Cruz, who was also employed by Philips II and III. With the seventeenth century we come to the new king, Philip IV, and the new painter Velasquez. While the earlier art had been shaped largely by foreign influences, especially the Italian, Velasquez was a bold and independent spirit. He has been called the most Spanish of Spanish painters.

Diego Rodriguez de Silva Velasquez was born in Seville in 1599. This Andalusian

[1] It will be remembered that Philip sent her his own portrait by Titian. See page 66.

[2] One of these portraits is in the Prado Gallery at Madrid another at Fenway Court, Boston.

city was at that time the great commercial port of Spain. Sevillian merchants controlled the markets of the old Mediterranean ports, and even those of the north. The population was very cosmopolitan, but the general aspect was oriental. Houses were built with marble-paved courts, adorned with fountains, and furnished with objects of eastern workmanship. The popular amusements were dances, feasts, masques, and processions of oriental nature. It was altogether a rich, prosperous, and pleasure-loving city. Such was the background of the youth and early training of Velasquez, similar in many points to that of Rubens and Van Dyck in Antwerp, and of Titian in Venice. Such resemblances, however, count for nothing when one considers what widely different types of painting these several men represent. The character of a genius has never yet been explained by his environment.

Seville had its local school of painting, and when the boy, Velasquez, showed his bent for drawing, he was placed first under the instruction of Herrera, and later of Pacheco.

Five years of training under the latter gave him some command of his tools, and at the end of this time, marrying his master's daughter, he set up for himself. This was in 1618. Three years later the accession of Philip IV aroused his ambition to try his fortune in Madrid. Armed with influential introductions, he was not long in coming to royal notice. His first order from the young king was for an equestrian portrait, an ambitious subject for an inexperienced young painter. The picture seems to have been a creditable performance, and gave the king much satisfaction.[1] It was not long after that Velasquez received his appointment as court painter. A studio was assigned him on the ground floor of the palace, a regular salary was attached to the office, besides special payment for each work to be done. All the circumstances were favourable to the development of his art. It was the boast of Philip to maintain the piety of his father, the statesmanship of his grandfather, and the warlike spirit of his great-grandfather. To this he might have added

[1] The picture is unfortunately lost, probably destroyed by fire.

the artistic tastes of his grandfather. Like Charles V, he was on easy terms of familiarity with his court painter, having access by a secret passage to the studio, where a special chair was reserved for his Majesty. He was not only an excellent connoisseur, but is said to have been something of a painter himself. The king's interest in art was shared by his minister, Olivarez, and by many of the courtiers. Madrid contained at this time not a few valuable collections of paintings, and of other art objects, owned by genuine virtuosi.

It was a juvenile court to which Velasquez was called. The king himself was only eighteen years of age, and his wife, Isabella of Bourbon, but two years older. The king's sister Mary was a year younger than himself, his brother Don Carlos a year younger than she, and the brother Ferdinand, a boy of fourteen. Of the queen we have unfortunately no portrait made in these youthful days. She seems to have had an aversion to sittings, and female portraiture was not sufficiently fashionable to induce her to overcome the prejudice. She passed many years in neglect and obscu-

rity, and it was not till late in life that the king discovered her ability and goodness. Of the king and his brothers, the Prado gallery at Madrid contains full-length portraits by Velasquez, painted in their young manhood. One notes the strong family resemblance in the long, narrow face, the large nose, the heavy jaw, and thick lips. The costume is exceedingly simple for royalty, for the king took pride in making some radical changes in this matter as soon as he came to the throne. The large ruff previously worn was replaced by a wide, flat, saucer-like collar of Philip's own invention, called the "*golila.*" The plain black tunic and baggy knee-trousers complete the severity of the fashion. This serious scheme of colour Velasquez handled with great dignity, so placing his figures as to increase the impression of their height. Grave beyond their years, with the responsibilities of their position, these young princes show the blood royal, even in its decadence. The king's pose is formal and official, but altogether graceful and elegant. The same boyish, unformed face

is seen in the bust portrait in armour in the same gallery.

Don Carlos was the most promising of the three brothers, and his cleverness put the wary Olivarez on guard lest he win too much influence at the court. His untimely death at the age of twenty-five was the matter of some suspicion. Don Ferdinand left Spain in his early twenties, to take the regency of the Netherlands, after the death of Albert.[1] His portrait here is in hunting costume, standing in a landscape, accompanied by his dog. With this group of pictures belongs the portrait of Philip IV in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, painted at about the same time, or perhaps a little earlier. The young king here wears a long gold chain, with the order of the Golden Fleece, the only ornament to relieve the severe simplicity of his dress. This picture was acquired by the Museum in 1904, and after exciting wide-spread discussion is adjudged by the best authorities a fine and genuine work. From all these pictures one sees that Velasquez began his court life hampered

[1] See page 136.

by no spirit of flattery. The stamp of sincerity is on his work, and we are convinced of the resemblance of portrait to original.

An exciting episode of Velasquez' early connection with the court was the visit of Prince Charles Stuart of England, as the suitor of Philip's sister Dona Maria. The painter has shown us this young lady in her most pleasing aspect, in a portrait made a few years later. She could not dispense with the family mouth, but for the rest, her agreeable smile, and curling hair gave her a certain charm, while the big ruff relieved the narrowness of the face. She is described as of a lively temperament, a daring huntress, and very charitable and friendly. The Duke of Buckingham wrote to King James of England: "Without flattery I believe there is no sweeter creature in the world." The prince was an ardent lover, and an amusing story was told of his adventure in the garden of a summer-house whither he had followed his lady. Having climbed a high wall in the pursuit, he was making straight for the object of his affection, when she suddenly spied him,

and with a piercing shriek, turned and fled. A court official then warned him to make his escape on pain of death, and the prince ruefully took his leave. So strictly did the court etiquette prohibit any kind of love-making that it is no wonder that in spite of a formal betrothal, the match never came off. The lady became seven years later the wife of King Ferdinand of Hungary. It is on record that during the visit Velasquez made a portrait of the English prince which mysteriously disappeared.[1]

Velasquez had been nearly seven years at court when the even tenor of his life was interrupted in 1629 by the appearance of Rubens in Madrid. The Flemish painter had come on a diplomatic mission from England, and remained nine months, as busy with his art as with diplomacy.[2] He painted a number of pictures for the king, and made for himself many copies of Italian works in the royal collection. A great painter, an extensive trav-

[1] Mr. Frank Wood of Boston possesses an interesting portrait of Prince Charles which came from Spain and which he not unreasonably regards as the lost picture.

[2] See page 136.

eller, and a genial gentleman, Rubens brought many new ideas to the Spanish court painter. Velasquez, with all his provincialism, was a courtier and a man of parts. He could hold his own, even with such a man of the world as Rubens. The two became great friends. Together they climbed the steep ascent of the Sierra to make a sketch of the view. This visit was a turning point in the life of Velasquez, whether directly or indirectly through the influence of Rubens. A journey into Italy soon after brought to a close the first period of his career. The picture of the Topers, painted just before his departure, sums up the qualities of his first method. "Piecemeal realism" is the phrase of a clever critic, describing this art. Every head in the group has equal care and characterization, as in the early military groups of Frans Hals. The technique is close, tight, and hard.

The Italian journey covered nearly two years and took Velasquez to Venice, where he copied assiduously Titian and Tintoretto, to Rome, where he had free access to the works of Raphael and Michelangelo in the Vatican,

to Naples, where he painted the portrait of Philip's sister Maria, now Queen of Hungary,[1] and visited his countryman Ribera, thence home to Madrid in 1631. For a period of nearly twenty years Velasquez now continued at court, steadily developing his art. A new sense of decorative quality was one result of the visit in Venice. He had an opportunity to put this idea in practice in supervising the decorations of Philip's new palace of Buen Retiro. For this place he painted the famous Surrender of Breda, the masterpiece of his second period. In the centre Justin of Nassau presents the keys of the city to the victorious Marquis of Spinola in the presence of a number of attendants, while in the background a company of soldiers stand with lances erect. The fine decorative ensemble, which is a harmonious unity both in line and colour, is the setting for the noble study of individual portraiture. It was also in this period, with the freer and broader touch, that Velasquez painted some magnificent equestrian portraits. The painter seemed

[1] See page 234.

to understand horses and dogs no less than humans, and the splendid creatures of his portraits are alive in every muscle. The Spanish horses of this time were of a peculiar breed, rather small, but well-proportioned, and very swift and intelligent. An animal once ridden by the king could never be mounted by another, hence the royal steeds often grew heavy through idleness. In the portrait of Philip IV the cavalier is seen in profile riding across a landscape, on a spirited rearing horse. The king, who was the best horseman in Spain, sits as if born in the saddle: horse and rider are one. In his favourite exercise, the monarch is roused from his usual lethargic manner to real animation. The cocked hat and full armour give picturesque charm to the figure, and the whole composition is superbly decorative. It is conjectured that this picture was the one painted by Velasquez for the guidance of the Florentine sculptor Tacca in making the equestrian statue of the king. The equestrian portrait of Queen Isabella was its pendant at the entrance to Buen Retiro. The queen rides a

white palfrey which ambles to the left, but is so nearly covered by the sweeping robes of the rider that one sees only his fore quarters. The lady's face is painted with extreme delicacy, showing her beautiful eyes and sweet expression as her chief charms.

The Count Duke Olivarez is the subject of another great equestrian portrait. This ambitious minister exercised almost complete control over the weak king until his downfall in 1643. Having first introduced Velasquez to the king, he regarded the painter as a protégé, and had several portraits made by him, this being the most striking. The figure of the horse fills the canvas diagonally as the animal, seen from the rear, is about to leap a narrow stream. The rider turns his head to look over his shoulder, and we read in the haughty and sinister face something of the character of this "scarecrow of kings." He is dressed in armour, with a rich sash, and the decorative character of the piece is above praise.

While Velasquez was absent in Italy, a prince had been born to the royal family, and in the years following this child became the

painter's most frequent subject. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts contains one of the earliest of this series. Don Balthasar Carlos is here a little toddler in skirts, playing with a dwarf. The child's innocent gravity as he balances himself uncertainly on his feet, imitates to the life the mingled helplessness and dignity of the growing baby. The painter has also avoided the error of over-modelling the features — a common pitfall of child portraiture. In none of the portraits of the boy prince is the expression too mature for his years. Their charm is not in prettiness or in winsomeness, but in their perfect naïveté. The most interesting and beautiful are the hunting piece and the equestrian portrait, both painted at about the age of six. The subjects afforded splendid material for decorative composition, and Velasquez rose to the occasion. The youthful huntsman stands by a tree in the foreground of a mountain landscape, and a huge dog lies by his side. His high boots and large gauntlets, and the cap set jauntily aslant are the principal sporting items of his costume, and he grasps a gun firmly in the

right hand as he looks out of the picture with imperturbable complacency. A companion picture of Philip IV in hunting costume was painted at about the same time, with similar decorative quality. As a horseman, the little prince sits gallantly in the saddle, as becomes his father's son. His beautiful bay pony gallops forward with long mane and sweeping tail flying in the breeze. The picture is full of joyous life. Perhaps the last of the portrait series of the young prince is as a boy of fourteen standing in court dress. At sixteen years of age all the bright promises of his future were shattered by his death. Outside the royal household two striking portraits of this period are of the sculptor Montanez, and the Admiral Pulido.

In 1649 Velasquez again made an extended journey in Italy to buy works of art for his king. He revisited Venice, Naples, and Rome, lingering till 1651. In the Eternal City he was honoured by the patronage of the Pope Innocent X, for whom he made one of his most interesting portraits. With undeviating adherence to nature, he did nothing to

soften the ugliness of a very unprepossessing face, or ennoble the expression of an ignoble character. The work is so strong in realism that a photograph from the painting produces the same effect as if directly from life. During his visit in Rome, Velasquez discussed with Salvator Rosa the merits of the Italian masters. Raphael, it appears, did not please him at all, but he gave first place to the Venetians. "It is Titian," he said, "that bears the banner."

Upon his return to Madrid Velasquez entered upon what is called his third manner of painting. This is to a certain extent a method of impressionism. With extraordinary facility for reproducing the relations of tones, he painted the object surrounded by light and air. The king, after several years of widowerhood, had now taken as his second wife, his niece, Mariana of Austria, who had been betrothed to the Prince Balthasar. The marriage was celebrated with great pomp and festivity. Triumphal arches were erected in the streets of Madrid through which passed the splendid procession of German, Flemish,

and Spanish bodyguards, followed by heralds, grandees, and their pages, and ladies on horses and in coaches. The bride was a girl of fourteen, only three years older than her stepdaughter, Maria Theresa. Both girls sat to Velasquez for their portraits, wearing the absurd Spanish dress, which was the ugliest in Europe. High neck and long sleeves were *de rigeur*. A long-waisted corset as stiff as a coat of mail, and a hoop of monstrous circumference enveloped the figure. The hair was curled and built up with the addition of silk and wool into a huge structure resembling a cauliflower, and ornamented with ribbons and jewels. Rouge was plentifully bedaubed over cheeks, forehead, ears, and chin, shoulders, and hands. Madame d'Aulnay, a French countess visiting Madrid in 1679, wrote of the rouge custom that she "never saw boiled crabs more highly coloured." With such incumbrances the fairest of maidens could scarcely be made attractive, and neither Mariana nor Maria Theresa could be called a beauty. Yet such was the magic of Velasquez' technique, that he has made a masterpiece even

of the painting of a ridiculous costume. Mariana is said to have had somewhat boisterous spirits and found the restrictions of court etiquette quite irksome. In trying to assume a proper regal gravity in her portrait, she looks unhappy and ill-tempered. Maria Theresa, on the other hand, was of a lovely and gentle nature, pious and charitable. Velasquez has rendered the sweet gravity of her face with great delicacy. The little lady became in later years the wife of Louis XIV of France, and her portraits were then made by the French court painter, Mignard.[1]

The first child of Philip IV and Mariana was the Princess Margaret, at whose christening Maria Theresa stood as sponsor. On the way to chapel a costly ring slipped from the hand of Maria Theresa, and as a poor woman was restoring it to her, the princess said graciously, "Keep it, God has sent it to you." The baby Margaret grew into a lovely child, and became the darling of the court as the Prince Balthasar had once been. Her portraits were now in demand, and again Velas-

[1] See page 213.

Louvre, Paris] [Velasquez

PORTRAIT OF THE PRINCESS MARGARET

quez caught on the canvas the essential spirit of childhood. The little girl, in a lace dress, standing beside a table, is one of these pictures, and another is the half-length figure in the Louvre. The elusive charm of the technique is the despair of copyists, so light is the touch of the brush in securing this transparent effect. There is here no hardness of outline or modelling; Velasquez had come to the height of his skill. The climax of his achievement was the portrait group of Las Meninas (Maids of Honour), of which this little Margaret is the heroine. A plausible story is told explaining the origin of the unique composition. The king and queen were together one day in the studio giving Velasquez a portrait sitting. The painter stood at his easel, and on the wall behind him was a mirror in which the royal pair could see their own reflection. Presently the Princess Margaret came in, attended by her maids of honour and dwarfs. The king was struck with the picturesqueness of the group, and desired to have the scene transferred to canvas, as was accordingly done. We look into the

room from the standpoint of the royal sitters. The setting reminds one of the Dutch interiors at which Peter de Hooch was so adept in this period. The illusion is so perfect that Gautier wrote, "One is tempted to ask when standing before it, Where then is the picture?" The figures are so alive that they fairly breathe. It is one of the few pictures in the world which express a perfect unity of colour, line, definition, modelling, and tone. Another child of Philip's second marriage was the Prince Philip Prosper, a sickly boy who lived only four years. A single portrait by Velasquez has preserved the memory of the fragile little fellow, dressed in skirts, with his playthings strung on a girdle.

The royal child portraits of Velasquez suggest by contrast those which his contemporary, Van Dyck, painted at the court of Charles I. The outward prettiness of the Stuart princes makes them popular favourites, while the Spanish children have only their child nature to commend them, and this in some cases obscured by their dress. Everything in his environment tended to strengthen Van Dyck's

leaning towards the pretty and flattering, while Velasquez adhered sturdily to reality. Velasquez's time seems to have been practically monopolized by the royal service, and he had no such opportunities as Van Dyck to paint other patrons. This is especially regrettable in the matter of women's portraits. The royal family providing him only one such subject, and that an unwilling sitter (Queen Isabella), we wish the more that some of the Spanish beauties might have been perpetuated on his canvases. Even had the king allowed him time for such work, it is improbable that orders would have come, as the Spanish husbands were notoriously jealous and guarded their wives in almost oriental seclusion. An English nobleman visiting in Madrid was attacked by a party of fifteen armed men for merely daring to look at a lady on a balcony. How dangerous then would it have been to admire a lady's portrait. Nevertheless at least one Spanish beauty — a nameless one — lives for us through the art of Velasquez. She is the Lady of the Fan in the Wallace Collection, with the wonderful eyes which

only Spain brings forth. Velasquez also dared to paint his own wife. Certainly she was no beauty, even when we subtract the high coiffure from her face. She meets our gaze, however, with an intimacy of expression which has much charm.

Court dwarfs and buffoons figure in the pictures of Velasquez with an intense realism which exaggerates their grotesqueness. The idiot "El Bobo," the sad-eyed "Sebastian," the grave "El Primo," and the pompous "Inglese," gorgeously attired in court dress, are of this strange company. Don Juan de Austria, a haggard old man, pathetic in his forced jocoseness, and Pabillos de Valladolid, striking an oratorical attitude, are among others who in a different way served to amuse the jaded tastes of the court.

The last portraits of the king show the natural changes in the face which Velasquez had studied so faithfully over thirty years. Time has coarsened the features which were naturally so large. The neck has thickened, making the massive chin more prominent than ever. The moustaches have grown to a fierce

National Gallery, London] [Velasquez

PORTRAIT OF PHILIP IV
(OLD)

length, and are turned up in military fashion. The eyes have the weary droop of advancing years and disappointed hopes. One of these portraits is in Madrid and another in the National Gallery. Through all the changes of the years king and painter had continued on terms of harmonious intimacy. The crowning mark of the royal favour was the cross of Santiago which made Velasquez a knight. With peculiar fitness the usefulness of the two men ended almost simultaneously. Philip was stricken with paralysis in 1659, and Velasquez died in 1660. The king lived on a few years and even had his portrait painted again by another hand, but it is only through the art of Velasquez that he lives as a striking historic figure.

The qualities of Velasquez do not appeal to a large public. He is so simple that the uninitiated see nothing wonderful about him, little dreaming that such simplicity implies great knowledge. He taught art how to look at nature, in order to reproduce faithfully the impression of the natural object. He was

absolutely sincere, without evasion and without tricks. He never stooped to flattery, and he did not try to probe the secrets of the mind. The kind of subject set before him did not concern him, beautiful or ugly, noble or ignoble, man, woman, or child. He made the most of the slenderest resources. He was sparing of colour, using only the most severe and stately schemes. Of academic rules he was quite independent: he was a rule unto himself. He was the first of the moderns, and so far in advance of his times that he is only just coming into his own. Several pictures bear the painter's name as self portraits, of which the most interesting is that of the Capitol, Rome. This is the face of the man as we like to imagine him, with high brow and fine eyes, courtly, dignified, and sincere.

NOTE ON GOYA

Once again Spain brought forth a great painter in the person of Francesco Jose de Goya y Lucientes. Appointed painter to Charles IV late in the eighteenth century his prolific brush served the court in many capacities. In portraiture he has been compared by turns to Gainsborough and Rembrandt, though he did not seek to imitate either, being of audacious and independent temper. His work is variable in quality but there are indeed some remarkable portraits among them, full of vitality,

delicacy, and fascination. Like his great predecessor Velasquez, he painted his king and queen in large equestrian portraits. In pictures of women and children he often attained exquisite charm.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ENGLISH PORTRAIT SCHOOL

ENGLAND was the last of the great European countries to develop a national school of painting. It was Henry VIII who first awoke to the fact that his people were so behindhand in the matter of art. The contemporary monarchs, Charles V and Francis I, were vying with each other in the patronage of painting, and he did not wish to appear any less munificent or progressive than they.[1] He accordingly invited Raphael to his court, but the favourite of popes and cardinals had no mind to exchange Rome for a land of barbarians. A few lesser Italians were all that the English king could attract, until he was so fortunate as to secure the services of Holbein. The German painter, as we have seen, did splendid work in Eng-

[1] See page 107.

land and aroused a widespread interest in portrait painting which steadily increased.[1] In the following two hundred years a succession of continental artists were employed by English sovereigns in the practice of portrait painting. Queen Mary was immortalized by the Fleming Sir Anthony Moro,[2] Elizabeth, by Lucas de Heere, Mark Gerard and the Italian Zucchero. King James had several Flemings in his service, Mytens, Jansens, and Van Somer. Then came Charles I with the incomparable Van Dyck, to be followed by Charles II with Sir Peter Lely and Sir Godfrey Kneller. The English peerage had patronized these artists liberally, but without discrimination: there was little genuine connoisseurship. The fashionable painter of the hour set the standard of taste. Lely in his day was reckoned as good as Van Dyck, and Sir Godfrey Kneller as good as Lely. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the popular creed was "Shakespeare in poetry and Kneller in painting." This was the state of

[1] See page 120.
[2] See page 228.

affairs when the young painter Reynolds returned to London after three years of study in Italy and ventured to introduce some innovations. He met at first much opposition, but he had not long to wait for success, and in the end, as all the world knows, he founded a national portrait school which is the glory of English art. With such brilliant leaders as Reynolds and Gainsborough, it included lesser lights of varying degrees: Romney, Opie, Hoppner, and Lawrence; with Barry, Beechey, Etty, Northcote, and Shee, as minor names. These men were fortunate in having a biographer like Allan Cunningham, who was a sort of English Vasari, preserving the personalities of the artists as well as an accurate record of their works, and interspersing his narrative with lively anecdote.

Certain common tendencies and certain common points of craftsmanship unite these men in a "school." Some of these may be plainly traced to Van Dyck, while others were the natural expression of the spirit of the times. For the rest each painter cherished, not a little jealously, his own particular forte.

The proudest claim of the school is that it developed the beauty of womanhood and childhood. Slowly through the centuries, portrait painting had been working towards this goal, but it was the English, with the most beautiful women and children in the world, who first touched it. The Italian Renaissance had produced much that was beautiful in ideal types of the Virgin mother and the divine babe. Leonardo had been the subtlest in his portrait interpretations, Titian and the Venetians, the most absorbed in bodily charm. Van Dyck, though advancing upon his predecessors in the number and interest of his child and woman portraits, still left much to be desired. It could not yet be said that any painter up to this time regarded the woman or child with an understanding at all comparable to that bestowed upon the man.

Another characteristic quality of the eighteenth-century English portrait is the animation and cheerfulness of the subject. Contrasted with the gravity and dignity of the people of Titian, Van Dyck and Velasquez, this new way was very striking. Before

Leonardo, no portrait face had ever smiled, and for a century after, the serious note prevailed. The seventeenth-century Dutch had made the first decided break from this tradition. Frans Hals in particular had devoted himself to the joyous aspects of human life. This mode of treatment, transferred from the coarser and commoner subjects of his brush to the English aristocracy, gives distinctive character to the English school.

From Van Dyck came the noble air of distinction which prevails in the English eighteenth-century portrait. Some of his most successful poses were borrowed outright as the ideal expression of the princely bearing. From Van Dyck, too, as an inevitable corollary, came the tendency to flattery which was the English painters' pleasant weakness.

Reynolds himself led in this direction, making his men "all nobleness," his women "all loveliness," and his children "all simplicity." But Lawrence was perhaps the mightiest flatterer of them all. The commercial instinct was too strong in this "nation of shopkeepers" for the painter to resist the temptation

[Reynolds

CHILD WITH KITTEN

to tickle his noble patron's vanity. With flattery must be coupled artificiality, which was the besetting sin of the age. England indeed never went to such extremes as France, nor did she produce any Nattier or Greuze. But portraiture could not reflect faithfully contemporary life without more or less affectation in attitude, costume, and expression. The greatest absurdity perhaps was the craze for allegorical or mythological subjects, such as prevailed in France. English gentlewomen took delight in posing as Hope nursing Love, as Diana disarming Cupid, and as many another classical divinity in a sentimental rôle. Offsetting these idiocies were the family groups like snap-shots of nursery frolics and garden romps, embodying so charmingly the joys of English home life.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was particularly felicitous in this direction. There seemed no end to his resourcefulness in inventing story motives for portraits. A sitting in the big studio at Leicester Square was an event to look forward to. Here was an atmosphere of genial courtesy which put everybody at ease.

The painter had a genius for child friendships, and was a capital playmate. He contended that all the natural motions of childhood are graceful, and watching his little visitors in their games, he caught many a charming attitude and gesture. The lively Miss Bowles, skipping about the park with her pet spaniel, suddenly sees something to attract her attention, drops on her knees, clasps her dog in a choking embrace, and challenges the intruder with merry eyes. Master Bunbury, a lusty boy of nine, has run himself panting, and sits under a tree to watch with bated breath some object in the distance. Not less appealing in their child-likeness are other little folk who are not quite so active, like Frances Harris standing by a tree with her hand on the head of a big dog, and Penelope Boothby, the demure, crossing her mit-enveloped hands primly on her lap.

The Countess Spencer, in broad-brimmed hat and lace-trimmed mantle, walking through the glade with her little son, calls the child to her from some fancied danger, and stooping gathers him to her side, while the tiny dog is

National Gallery, London] [Reynolds

LADY COCKBURN AND HER CHILDREN

impatient to scamper away. Mrs. Payne-Gallway, enjoying an outing with her little boy, gives him a ride, clinging to her shoulder, "Pick-a-back." The Duchess of Devonshire has had her baby daughter brought to her morning room for a romp, and seated on a sofa, trots the little creature to Banbury Cross amid gurgles of laughter. The stately Lady Cockburn gathers her three darlings about her, the baby lying across her capacious lap, while the others try to draw his attention, one peeping roguishly over his mother's shoulder. Reynolds managed groups of this sort with astonishing ease, though doubtless what looks so spontaneous often cost him a deal of thought. His sense of composition was admirable; whatever the form which he chose for a basis the lines fall perfectly within his diagram without any apparent forcing. A just sense of balance gives dignity and elegance to his style.

For extreme vivacity the portrait of the Countess Crosbie has never been surpassed. The lady comes hurrying towards us across the lawn, her slender figure swaying with the

swift motion, her arm eagerly out-stretched, and in another moment she will pass out of the canvas. Even in seated figures Reynolds could convey the sense of animation, as in the Honourable Ann Bingham, and the bewitching Nelly O'Brien. In subjects like Mrs. Braddyl he suggested admirably the meditative mood, in Kitty Fisher, the pose of youthful insouciance, and in Lavinia Bingham, the air of sweet timidity. We like to dwell upon Reynolds' women and children, because they are a new creation in art, but not because he was less successful with men. It is he who has given us the Johnson of Boswell's pages: ponderous, uncouth, untidy, his face distorted with the force of his argument. Lord Heathfield, the hero of Gibraltar, grasping the keys of the fortress, embodies the indomitable spirit and the high moral calibre of the English soldier. Lawrence Sterne, with the wide mouth curved in a satirical smile, fixes his deep-set eyes upon us with his inscrutable glance. Charles James Fox, Edmund Burke, Goldsmith, Garrick, and a host of other men

who lent lustre to the reign of George III live again in Reynolds' portraits.

It would be useless to go on enumerating and describing the portrait works of a painter who produced two or three thousand pictures. Naturally they could not be uniformly good. None knew better than the painter himself the faults of drawing and technique into which he sometimes fell through lack of early training. Yet his essential gifts of charm outweighed lesser things, and he was the idol of the fashionable world. In his most prolific period he had six sitters a day and often turned out a portrait in four hours. His unfortunate mania for experimenting in colours wrecked many a beautiful canvas. From the use of pigments which were not permanent, faded faces look out to-day which are mere ghosts of their original brilliancy.

As president of the Royal Academy, as well as in the direction of pupils, Reynolds had a great influence upon contemporary art, but his best qualities have never been duplicated. Gainsborough was his closest rival, and though coming to London late in life,

when Reynolds had already been established over twenty years, the royal favour brought him instant success. Reynolds could never quite forgive this encroachment upon his own supremacy until his rival lay on his death-bed. He then paid him a farewell call and expressed his sympathy in appropriate words. It is said that Gainsborough whimsically replied, "We are all going to heaven together — and Van Dyck is of the company." Gainsborough was by no means the all-around man that Reynolds was, but he had flashes of inspiration which the other was incapable of. Once and again he might fail of securing a successful arrangement, but another time, as a person entered the studio, he would see on the instant the complete picture, and base his work on this sudden vision. Careful elaboration could never achieve such perfect results. In some such way he must have conceived the incomparable "Morning Walk." A bridal pair (Squire and Mrs. Hallett), strolling through the park with their dog, exhale the delightful atmosphere of their romance. The figures are combined in a per-

fect harmony of line and move forward in rhythmic unison. Orpin, the Parish Clerk, looks up from the ponderous volume he has been perusing with cheerful response to an inquiry which the painter must have caught in the face in some actual interview.

A wonderful gift of sympathy gave Gainsborough an insight into character vouchsafed to few. He often discovered pathos where others might have read a more cheerful story. Elizabeth Linley, the " fair maid of Bath," is one of the most appealing of his sitters, with big dreamy eyes and delicate features. She was the beautiful singer who made a romantic runaway match with the actor Richard Sheridan. The Honourable Mrs. Graham, standing against a pillar, richly dressed, and bearing the honours of her position with sweet dignity, has an air of interesting melancholy. Upon her death, in the fulness of her young womanhood, her husband could not endure the wistful gaze of the portrait, and had it hidden away where it was lost for half a century. Even Mrs. Robinson, painted at the height of her career as Perdita when enjoying the

favour of the prince, sits under a tree, lost in some sorrowing reflections, as if foreseeing her lonely and unhappy end.

The famous Blue Boy, seen in a black and white reproduction, might almost be taken for the work of Van Dyck, so closely did the painter imitate the graceful attitude and air of breeding for which the earlier painter set the type. But with this he united a sweetness and naïveté which are not of Van Dyck. In colour the picture is from Gainsborough's own palette, which one can pick out easily in a multitude of his contemporaries' works. The pearly gray of his flesh tones, and the delicacy and refinement of his harmonies, especially in handling blue, mark his peculiar individuality. In poetic imagination he had no equal among his contemporaries.

The distinctive qualities of Reynolds and Gainsborough are admirably illustrated in their portraits of the same person, as for instance the Duchess of Devonshire, the beauty of whom Gibbon wittily said, that "if she beckoned to the Lord Chancellor to rise from his woolsack he could not but obey." Mrs.

National Gallery, London] [Gainsborough

PORTRAIT OF MRS. SIDDONS
(DETAIL)

Siddons was another fair sitter they both portrayed. Reynolds was to paint the great actress as the Tragic Muse, and it is said that on her arrival at the studio, he led her to the chair, saying in his pompous phraseology, "Ascend your undisputed throne; bestow on me some idea of the Tragic Muse." Whereupon she at once assumed the position in which he painted her. It was undeniably a histrionic pose, as she sits with head turned, listening to the voices of conflicting emotions, the left hand raised as if to command silence. Nobly conceived and finely executed, it was no wonder that Reynolds was proud to paint his name on the ornamental border of her robe, with the gallant explanation that he "could not resist the temptation of going down to posterity on the hem of her garment." In Gainsborough's portrait of the same year, Mrs. Siddons, the woman of the world in modish attire, sweeps one day into the artist's studio, drops into a chair for a chat and is caught on the canvas in all the charm and spontaneity of her vivacious mood. Still another phase of the lady's many-sided

character was brought out by Lawrence, who painted her several times. In the best known of these pictures, she is in negligée, and looking full into her face, we get a bit of the weariness, as well as the sweetness of her mood.

To compare Gainsborough with still another artist, we may match his Mrs. Robinson with the portrait of the same lady by Romney. In the walking-dress of Perdita, muff and lace bonnet, she moves across our vision turning upon us a face full of coy and piquant charm.

Romney, like Reynolds, looked preferably on the joyous side of life, though not insensible to the graver aspects. It was Emma Lyon whose buoyant spirit opened to him the wider possibilities of his art. She was no less an artist than he in her own way, creating new subjects for him, as the mood possessed her. Now she is Circe, the enchantress, working her fascinating spell upon us; now a Bacchante, leading the sacrificial kid, with a hound bounding joyously at her side. Cassandra, Titania, Euphrosyne, Ariadne, a Nun, and a Spinner, are some of her many disguises. She could not be ungraceful if she

Wallace Collection, London] [Romney

PORTRAIT OF MRS. ROBINSON

would; her face was beautiful from every point of view; and her sparkling eyes and lovely smile never fail to captivate us. Her strange career reads like an exaggerated romance of Balzac. Beginning life as a ladies' maid, she passed from one entanglement to another till her marriage with Sir William Hamilton gave her entrée to the great world. She then passed out of Romney's life for further adventures. For nearly ten years she had been a necessity to his art, and his loss was inestimable. Not long after her marriage he broke down completely, returning to his country home and long neglected wife to die.

Romney is distinguished by the beauty of his draughtsmanship, by pleasing colour, and a delightful pictorial sense. Some exquisite groups of children show a flow of line and a lightness of motion that could scarcely be equalled in any school of art. Heads like the Parson's Daughter, and Mrs. Tickell, and full-length figures like Mrs. Mark Currie, illustrate the simplicity and directness of his art. He was not perhaps a very profound thinker, nor an artist of great range, but

without him English art would have missed a delightful element peculiar to himself.

Of less important names Opie is one whose work has stood well the test of time. He had not the aptitude of some of his contemporaries for women's portraits, and lacked both the brush and the tongue of the flatterer. A lady once sitting for her portrait bade him make her beautiful. "Then, Madame, I suppose you do not want it to be like," was the caustic reply. His men's portraits were painted with admirable sincerity, and are genuine character studies in the expressiveness of the eyes. Some of his distinguished sitters were Charles Fox, Southey, and Mr. William Siddons. Opie was himself a man of the typical artistic temperament, subject to fits of depression and self-disparagement. His modest success was due to his own merit, and he made his way without influence or favour.

Hoppner had a great vogue for a time, although his name is now little known. Unfortunately his colours have not always stood well. He painted the portraits of several members of the royal family, and was con-

sequently sought after by many persons of quality. The names of bishops, dukes and earls were in his lists, as well as many beautiful women of rank. In the heyday of his popularity he met a powerful competitor in Lawrence, who had won the favour of the king, as Hoppner had that of the Prince of Wales. The patrons of the rival painters made two society factions, and feeling became very bitter. Lawrence had however the surest passport to success in his gift of flattery. What woman could resist the temptation of having her charms enhanced by his magic brush? Hoppner's death in 1810 left the younger man alone in the field for the remaining twenty years of his life. In 1815 he was knighted and later became the president of the Royal Academy.

The story of Lawrence's life is peculiarly romantic, beginning in obscurity, as the son of an innkeeper. He was an infant prodigy, astonishing his father's guests when about five years of age with recitations and drawings. At ten he was supporting the family

with his pencil. In the fluctuating standards of the day he was ranked as high as his predecessors Reynolds and Gainsborough, but in more modern criticism his true place is assigned decidedly below them. In his works the artificial spirit of the age reached its limit. "Lawrence," said the blunt Opie, "made coxcombs of his sitters, and his sitters made a coxcomb of Lawrence." Certainly the affectations of his portrait personalities is often the first thing to strike us, and this is naturally more conspicious in women than in men. As Fanny Kemble wittily said, "They were fine ladies, but by no means great ladies." Yet his art was preëminently feminine in quality. Such portraits as Lady Blessington and Lady Gower are on his highest level, and show his remarkable insight. Comparing them with male portraits like John Julius Angerstein, and the Pope Pius VII, we see what Lawrence might have been, had he been strong enough to resist the meretricious taste of his environment. The captivating smile of the clever and fascinating woman, and the genial

[Lawrence

PORTRAIT OF LADY PEEL

refinement of the philanthropist have been seized with extraordinary success. Lawrence's colour was often very beautiful, particularly in the heads of children.

It is customary to include in the English school the Scottish painter Sir Henry Raeburn, who practised his profession in Edinburgh. This semi isolation kept him free from certain weaknesses of his contemporaries, and preserved the originality and vigour of his work. His style is marked by a boldness and simplicity which have linked his name to that of Frans Hals and Velasquez. His six portraits of Sir Walter Scott have made the face of the great romancer familiar all over the world. Many other distinguished Scotchmen sat to him and some charming women. His portraits are full of vitality.

It was during the latter half of the great period of English portrait painting that our own early American portrait school was developed. Our two foremost painters, Copley and Stuart, were a long time in London where they practised their profession and enjoyed

the help of the Anglicized American President of the Royal Academy, Benjamin West. The mother country had reason to be proud of her American art offspring, and Copley and Stuart proved solid names upon which to build the art history of the new nation.

CHAPTER XV

SOME EXAMPLES OF MODERN PORTRAIT PAINTING

AFTER long gazing into the past centuries of portrait painting, it is difficult to readjust the focus to more recent times. There is a tendency with some critics to belittle the work of the nineteenth century, as compared with that of the great periods which went before. On the other hand there is danger of overestimating the prize winners of the hour. In the matter of mere craftsmanship certainly the modern painter has shown himself an adept. Many problems which puzzled his predecessors have long since been solved. There is an inexhaustible stock of types from which to select his methods. For the rest, it remains for a later century to determine whether technical acquirement has been matched by the

higher gifts of imagination and insight which characterized the old portrait masters. For our present purpose it will be sufficient to set down in order a few important names, of several nationalities, which stand for distinctive achievement in this line.

Paris has been generally regarded as the art centre of the modern world, the great training school in the painter's craft. And Paris has produced some notable portrait painters. Bonnat is a name revered by many men of the younger generation who have come in touch with him in the École des Beaux Arts. He is regarded as a fine draughtsman, and a vigorous portrayer of character. Three of his portrait works in the Luxembourg illustrate his best points: Léon Cogniet, his master Aimé Millet, the sculptor, and Cardinal Lavigerie, late primate of Algeria. Masculine portraits have been his specialty: his gifts are not for the interpretation of feminine character. His list of sitters includes some of the greatest French names of the century: Victor Hugo, Dumas, Gounod, Thiers, Grévy, Carnot, Pasteur, Puvis de Chavannes.

Uffizi Gallery, Florence] [Bonnat

PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF

France may justly be proud of such a noble historical series.

Carolus Duran is another master beloved of the art student in Paris. His special distinction has been in the brilliant use of colour. Many beautiful women have lent themselves to his art, and he has distinguished them with delicacy and insight. His portrait of his wife, La Dame au Gant, of the Luxembourg, is a beautiful full-length work. Fluttering across the canvas with exquisite grace, she pauses to glance at us with an enchanting smile. M. Carolus Duran has paid one visit to the United States and has had many American patrons.

With Bonnat and Duran is classed Cabanel, each one of the trio having a large following more or less in rivalry. Cabanel's portraits of women are especially beautiful. He is known in this country by the fine portrait of Miss Catherine Wolfe in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Benjamin Constant, who died in 1902, was also known in his last years for portrait painting though primarily devoted to oriental subjects. He had the

honour of painting the portrait of Queen Victoria in 1899.

Paris is also the headquarters of Boldini, the most widely distinguished portrait painter of the Italians. He has a very acute perception of character and imparts a vivid sense of animation to his sitters. Specially notable are his portraits of the Princess Ponialowski, and of the German painter Menzel. Another Italian portrait painter, at one time long in Paris is Vittorio Corcos, a native of Leghorn. He later returned to his own country, and in 1892, in Florence, painted the portrait of the poet Carducci. The recognized leader of the modern Italian school was the Neapolitan Domenico Morelli, who died in 1901. Distinguished especially for his great religious works he was likewise a portrait painter of great merit. In the gallery of modern art at Turin is his portrait of the statesman Quintino Sella, standing at the ministerial bench in the senate at Rome. In the same gallery is a portrait of Cavour by Gordigiani. The well-known portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Browning were

painted by this latter artist, whose studio was long a favourite resort in Florence.

One of the most important portrait painters of the early nineteenth century was from Germany. This was Winterhalter, a pupil of the Munich Academy, who went to Carlsruhe in 1828 and was made court painter. In 1834 he settled in Paris, and in the following years painted many crowned heads of Europe: Louis Philippe and his queen, Leopold of Belgium and his queen, the Emperor and Empress of Russia, Napoleon and Eugénie, and various members of the English royal family. A series of portraits represent the present King Edward in his boyhood and youth. The artistic character of the work is not remarkable enough to have made the name famous, but in a period which knew not photography the portraits have served as valuable historical records.

The most prolific German portrait painter in the nineteenth century was undoubtedly Franz von Lenbach. From humble birth (1836), as one of seventeen children of a poor stonemason, he rose by his own efforts to fame and

fortune, and all the rewards of honour and success. Throughout his life he retained much of the rugged and unpolished manner of the class in which he was born, and was often rude and sarcastic in speech. But his tremendous ambition, energy, and self-confidence carried him forward. His later years were passed in a splendid marble palace at Munich, filled with treasures of art, and here he died in 1903 after sixty-five years of eventful and successful living. The roll-call of Lenbach's sitters includes practically all the German celebrities of his day. Among the most notable are: the old Emperors William, and Franz Josef, Theodore Mommsen, the historian, Paul Heyse, the poet, Björnsterne Björnson, the novelist, Frans Liszt and Wagner, the musicians, Count von Moltke and Prince Bismarck. In Italy he made portraits of Queen Margherita and the Pope Leo XIII.

The name of Lenbach is indissolubly associated with Bismarck. The relations between the two men covered a long period of years during which over one hundred portraits of

the Iron Chancellor were produced. The painter had all the privileges of an intimate family friend, making frequent visits in the prince's household, and sketching his host in any time or place as the fancy seized him. Seldom in the history of art has there been such devotion on the part of a painter to a single subject. It is like the service of Velasquez for Philip IV. The character of Bismarck has been shaped for posterity in this series of portraits. With every variety of pose there is always the same inflexibility of purpose stamped on the face. Whether the eyes are turned full upon you, or look aside under their shaggy, beetling brows, they see everything and tell nothing. The lines of thought in the forehead, the lines of determination about the chin, express the iron will of the man whom everybody feared.

Early in his career Lenbach became an ardent admirer of the old masters, and copied many of their portraits. He made it his aim to secure in his canvases the same effects of rich, mellowed, and subdued colour which characterize these works of past centuries. His

success in this respect was quite wonderful. The face of the sitter was of first importance to him; the surroundings were of no account. Concentrating all his power upon the character and expression, especially upon the eyes, he made the countenance emerge, as it were, from nothingness. His forte lay with men, and with men of stern fibre. The solemn introspective gaze of Mommsen, the hard impenetrable mask of Von Moltke, the meditative aspect of Björnson, were subjects of his own kind. The seriousness of the German race is reflected in his art. He was, as a rule, much less successful with women. The artistic methods of Lenbach were open to criticism in many respects: the questionable practice of using photography, his careless draughtsmanship, his slurring of details. On the other hand his admirers emphasize, not without reason, the intense vitality of his portrait work, and the strong note of psychic interest.

In England, as we have seen, portrait painting has always been of great importance, as the branch of art best understood by the average Anglo-Saxon. In the early part of the

Victorian reign Sir George Hayter was portrait painter to the queen and had the honour of painting the girl sovereign taking the oath of office. In the following years the royal family have patronized a succession of painters, often from other lands, and not always with much artistic discrimination. Excellent portrait work has been done by a group of Englishmen too numerous to mention, including Sir John Millais, Herkomer, Fildes, and Orchardson.

George Frederick Watts was in many respects the most notable English portrait painter of the nineteenth century. His works show us the best of Victorian England. In addition to his large number of commissioned portraits from people of importance he undertook as a labour of love a series of representative Englishmen, including statesmen, lawyers, artists, musicians, men of letters, and divines. It was in such high company that the painter was most at home. Nature made him a gentleman of the finest fibre, a dreamer of noble dreams, a philosopher, and a thinker. He began his artistic career as a mural painter,

and his preference was always for allegorical and decorative subjects. Portrait painting was forced upon him for commercial reasons, but he accepted it as a valuable discipline, and put into it the same imaginative and decorative gifts which inspired his ideal subjects. He had a peculiar power for interpreting genius, seizing the essential character, and accentuating it by the accessories. The rugged head of Carlyle, at once noble and dogmatic, with the melancholy eyes and aggressive chin, the cold, austere face of John Stuart Mill, with the absent gaze of intense concentration, the meditative pose of Tennyson, rapt in the poet's vision, express to a marvel the men themselves. Others of this distinguished company are: Matthew Arnold, with forehead creased with lines of unrest, Robert Browning, in all the magnificence of his fully developed manhood, Rossetti, almost childlike, in his look of dreamy irresponsibility, Sir Andrew Clark, with the air of authority and self-restraint which belongs to the man of science and secrets. Motley, scholarly, modest, and intensely serious, William Morris, with Jove-

like head thrown back to confront the difficulties of art reform, and Lord Lytton, handsome and romantic. The delicately chiseled features of George Meredith's sensitive high-bred face, the long narrow countenance of Leslie Stephen, with the look of incisive thought, the well cut profile of Walter Crane, lifted with the air of inspiration, remain with one permanently as ideal types of novelist, critic, and artist. Cardinal Manning is also among these celebrities, a noble old man. The sunken cheeks, deep-set eyes, and thin compressed lips are the marks of the ascetic, while the expression is that of the mystic.

A critic has cleverly said that Watts "scarcely ever painted a man without making him about five times as magnificent as he really was," adding that the portraits made the men themselves "look like mean and unsympathetic sketches from the Watts originals." This glorifying process was not because the painter intentionally flattered his sitters, but because he saw in them the highest of which they were capable. It was by no means a subjective glamour which he cast about them in

the manner of Titian and Van Dyck. Each portrait shows what the man "was worth to God." Five portraits of Tennyson, majestic and godlike, attest the long and devoted friendship between the painter and the poet, and certainly poet was never more fortunate in an interpreter.

Watts also showed himself a student of character in portraits of women. Mrs. Percy Windham was one of his most successful subjects, a truly *grande dame,* painted in full length, leaning on the balustrade of her garden terrace. The decorative character of the panel is almost Venetian in beauty. The figure is drawn in long rhythmic lines, while the mass of foliage behind the head and the jar of flowers on the pavement unite with the green robe to form a rich colour ensemble. Mrs. Nassau Senior was the subject of another full-length portrait. Lovely in character as in person, the artist chose a felicitous motive in representing her watering a potted flower. The rippling hair drawn over her ears, and dressed low in the neck, frames a face of angelic sweetness and purity. Mrs. Hughes is

Collection of Hon. Percy Windham, Salisbury, Eng.] [Watts

PORTRAIT OF MRS. PERCY WINDHAM

another sweet spirit among women, gentle, placid, motherly, comfortable. Her portrait is a bust, with a distant landscape suggested in the background. Portraits of Mrs. Leslie Stephen, Lady Granby, Lady Mount Temple, and Mrs. Ellice are others which have been highly praised by critics. The academic training of Watts was extremely meagre, and he never attained complete technical proficiency. Nevertheless there are certain points of craftsmanship in which he was unsurpassed, and in higher gifts of poetic imagination he stood alone in his generation.

Classed among the English painters, although American by birth and early education, was James McNeill Whistler. No man was ever more original — or more egotistic. During his life-time, it seemed impossible to hold middle ground in regard to him. One must either be an ardent admirer or a bitter enemy. His eccentricities and ironies have passed into proverbs. He divided humanity into two classes, artists, and the rest, declaring that the " rest " should never write, speak, or think about artists. Since his death in 1903

however the "rest" have taken upon themselves to discuss exhaustively his merits and his weaknesses; and exhibitions of his works have given a more complete idea of his aims and his methods. Whether as an etcher, a landscape painter or a portrait painter, his name will always be of great importance.

Whistler's chief preoccupation was with colour, in the most subtle neutral tints: blacks, blues, browns, and greys. Within this range he discovered a countless number of delicate gradations. He was indeed closely akin to the Japanese in this fondness for low-keyed harmonies. His portraits were painted with the main idea of making up a beautiful piece of decoration from his favourite palette. For this purpose he preferred a full-length life-size figure in a tall panel like a kakemono. Often the picture seems quite flat, the figure scarcely emerging from the background, which is made of the same hue as the drapery. The personality is thus rather ghostly, not warm and living. The name of the subject is immaterial. The picture is the "Yellow Buskin," instead of a portrait of Lady Archibald

Campbell, or "An Arrangement in Black and Brown," instead of Miss Rosa Corder. What matters it who these ladies were who lent their figures as motives for a decorative design? Their portraits, however, have become famous among the painter's finest works.

The patron who accepted the Whistlerian point of view was rewarded for his pains and his money by a beautiful work of art. He was sure of a picture whose subdued colour harmony would never jar, and would always be restful. Characterization and vitality might be lacking, but in their place a certain fine distinction could be counted on. Such refinement in colour must inevitably impart refinement to the subject.

Whistler's first important portrait work was the "White Girl," rejected by the Paris Salon (1863), but creating a great stir when exhibited in the Salon des Refusés. A girl dressed in white was seen standing against a white background with a white lily in her hand. A second study in the same key was the Little White Girl. Here a young girl in white is standing on a white rug before a fire-

place. The face, outlined in profile, is reflected in full front in the mirror over the mantle. This was the picture which inspired Swinburne's poem "Before the Mirror," which was printed on strips of gilded paper and fastened to the frame of the picture. A third Symphony in White was a composition of two girls in white; one lounging on a couch, the other seated on the floor leaning against it. Graceful young figures such as these lent themselves readily to Whistler's motives, but he had wonderful versatility in adapting to his ends sitters of every age. He was remarkably successful with children.

Miss Alexander is one of the most beautiful child portraits in the world. The little maid, in short stiff white frock, stands in a dancing school pose, hat in hand, looking out at the spectator. Two yellow butterflies flutter above her, not more airy and evanescent than the dainty little creature herself, poised as if to fly from the field of vision. The Rose of Lyme, the frail wide-eyed little girl of the Boston Art Museum, looking out at us with such pathetic sweetness, is a child to remember.

An amusing story is told of a child portrait Whistler attempted to paint for the father of four little girls. So long was he about the task, that each daughter had to sit for him in turn, at the desired age, and the picture was finally completed from the child of a neighbour. The painter's demand for sittings was the cause of much faultfinding among his patrons. It is said that Sir Henry Irving posed twenty times for the portrait in the part of Philip II, each time finding the canvas as bare as at the beginning, except for a small piece of linen. "How is it," he asked, "that in all this time you have painted only this piece of linen?" "Ah," said Whistler, "who save the Master could have painted that linen? Surely that is excuse enough." It is said that during this sitting Irving caught the peculiar laugh of Whistler and used it effectively in the part of Mephistopheles.

It has seldom been given to an artist to paint childhood and old age with equal success, but Whistler achieved this feat. He seems to have reserved all his tenderness for the two extremes of life. Among his most

notable works are beautiful and sympathetic portraits of his mother and of Thomas Carlyle. Both pictures are designed on the same plan: in the interior of a room the entire seated figure is seen in profile. The bareness of the surroundings and the severity of the straight-backed chair suggest the puritanic simplicity of both these fine old natures, and the linear composition accentuates this effect. Only the lace-edged ties of her cap, and the touch of lace at the wrists, relieve the plainness of the "Mother's" dress, which falls in scanty folds about her. The smooth hair, the folded hands, the lines about the drooping mouth, the fixity of gaze and the inclination of the head all express an intensity of character which is almost poignant. No one but Henry James could so fully interpret such a nature. Whistler's first title for the picture was "An Arrangement in Grey and Black," describing the colour scheme, which was too sombre to call forth immediate enthusiasm. The Academicians even classed it with the black and white drawings when it was exhibited. When it was at length purchased for the Luxem-

Corporation Gallery, Glasgow] [Whistler

PORTRAIT OF CARLYLE

bourg everybody began to praise it. Whistler, who always resented the praise of any single picture as implying disparagement of his other works, was impatient of the encomiums heaped upon the "Mother." "Wait," he said, "till the Sarasate is as old as the 'Mother,' with a skin of varnish upon it that has mellowed — then you will call that my *chef d'œuvre.*"

The Carlyle portrait shows the philosopher sunk in a melancholy revery. It is as if he had given up the battle in utter weariness and discouragement, and with mind and body relaxed, had fallen into a sorrowful apathy. Here we have the pathos of the Chelsea sage without his fighting qualities. Whistler was for some time a neighbour of Carlyle at Chelsea, and the two came to know each other well. Though following aims so widely different, both were alike strenuously opposed to sham. The old man was much impressed with Whistler's professional outfit, for the painter used brushes as big as a house-painter's, a large canvas, and a table for a palette. "You are indeed a workman," said the sitter, "for your tools are the tools of a workman." The

Carlyle portrait was in progress at the same time that little Miss Alexander was being painted. The old man and child met at the door one day as the former had just ended a wearisome sitting. "I am Miss Alexander," announced the little girl, demurely, "I am having my portrait painted." "Puir lassie, puir lassie," said Carlyle, compassionately, as he went on his way. His own comment on his completed portrait was "Weel, man, you have given me a clean collar, and that is more than Meester Watts has done." Some years after his death Carlyle's portrait was bought for the corporation of Glasgow. The sage was also painted by Sir John Millais, who made him much handsomer, less rugged, and less bitter, though not without a certain sternness and melancholy.

The portrait work of Whistler suggests inevitably a comparison with that of another Anglicized American, John Singer Sargent. It is not impossible to admire both men, but it is well-nigh impossible to imagine a greater contrast. While Whistler's art is almost feminine in delicacy, Sargent's work is pro-

nouncedly masculine; the one inclines somewhat to the eccentric and anemic, the other is sane and robust. While Whistler's portrait figures almost melt into their environment, Sargent's fairly jump out of the canvas with vitality. Beside the subtle reticence of Whistler's folk, Sargent's seem almost vulgarly self-assertive. While the former regard you impassively with a proud reserve, the latter fasten their eyes insistently upon you with the highest degree of intimacy. The Whistler world is one of calm repose, but the Sargent atmosphere is charged with electricity. Whistler looked through smoke-coloured glasses, and made his patrons array themselves in all sobriety: but Sargent's subjects are gorgeously attired in extremes of fashion and the painter's colour range seems as wide as nature's own. From time to time each found a sitter who was born, so to speak, for his special benefit. There is a singular correlation between subject and artist when a Sarasate sits for a Whistler or a Henry Higginson for a Sargent, the musician slender, sensitive, poetic, the man of affairs, big, burly, forceful.

To one who has seen these two portraits, a Higginson by Whistler, or a Sarasate by Sargent, is almost unthinkable. Yet Velasquez, to whom both these men have for different reasons been compared, might equally well have done either.

John Singer Sargent is the son of a Boston physician, but was born in Florence, where his father was practising his profession. His artistic training was in Paris, under Carolus Duran. He has for some years lived in London, but making occasional visits to the United States, he is claimed by ties on both sides of the water. His work is almost exclusively in portraiture, with the important exception of the mural paintings in the Boston Public Library. Since the death of Whistler and Watts he is entirely unrivalled in his chosen field. Working with great ease and rapidity, and besieged with patrons, he has already produced an immense number of portraits representing the *grand monde*. No recent painter has ever enjoyed more fully the appreciation of his contemporaries except perhaps the German Lenbach. At the Spring exhibition of

the Royal Academy his portraits are now the most conspicuous and attractive feature, and the Sargent exhibitions in Boston, in 1899 and 1903, drew people from all over the country.

His most characteristic style is the three-quarters figure, though he has had to meet the demand for bust portraits as well. In full-length figures he has perfect scope for his best. His bold brush-work requires large surfaces. In fact, because of their size and broad execution, his canvases are scarcely suitable for ordinary houses. They are designed rather for great establishments where long, spacious galleries afford the proper distance for vision. At the height of his popularity, Sargent has naturally become something of an autocrat. His prodigious prices would astound even the keen Reynolds. He usually has his own way in every particular as to costume, pose, and method. One can scarcely say whether his preference is for men, women, or children, so facile and brilliant is his touch through the whole range of human life.

To begin with children. The Honourable Laura Lister has become, like Whistler's Miss

Alexander, a world favourite, to class with such masterpieces as Velasquez's Princess Margaret. The child is dressed quaintly in a satin skirt which reaches to the floor, and wears a mob-cap over her pretty, short curls. The shy sweetness with which she regards you out of her big eyes is inexpressibly winning. Her American counterpart is little Miss Beatrice Goelet, painted six years before. She has the same picturesque quaintness of dress — the long full skirt — and the same shy wistfulness with a difference. There is mischief lurking in the big eyes of English child, but Beatrice is one of the timid little spirits whose rare charm only a great painter could divine. The famous "Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose" is another charming picture of child-life. Two little girls, in simple white frocks, stand amid the tall lily-stalks of the garden, intent upon lighting some Chinese lanterns. The scheme is like a tapestry in decorative effect.

Sargent's brilliant virtuosity is inevitably associated with superb toilets. For the play of light on folds of satin, and for the suggestion of diaphanous draperies, this painter is a

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Players' Club, New York] [Sargent

PORTRAIT OF EDWIN BOOTH

very wizard. That he takes delight in such work is quite evident, and he fairly revels in portrait groups where two or three sisters in evening dress make a radiant bouquet of colour. In such compositions there is apt to be some straining after effect: the motive often lacks spontaneity. Such for instance is the much admired Mrs. Meyer and her Children, and such the Ladies Acheson, and the Misses Hunter.

But with all his delight in texture work and sheer dexterity Sargent has far higher gifts of portraiture. His characterization is so fine that we can read the nationality at a glance: English or American, French or Italian or Hebrew. How subtly does he distinguish between the nervous vivacity of the American heiress and the languid grace of the English peeress; between the alert acumen of the American financier and the easy equipoise of the English gentleman. He even suggests the essential Bostonian in the spare erect figure of the lady of Beacon Hill. Scholars like Miss Cary Thomas, artists like William M. Chase, actors like Booth and Jefferson, Ada

Rehan and Ellen Terry, musicians like Wolff, bear the unmistakable stamp of their professional gifts, with the added touch of their own individuality.

Sargent is generally regarded as a remarkable psychologist. His gift in character revelation is sometimes appalling. He discovers secrets with an insight as searching as the x ray. Any one with an unpleasant secret had better keep away from him. It is said that a physician once diagnosed a previously unsuspected malady from Sargent's portrait of his patient! Complaint is sometimes made that in his cleverness at seizing a transitory expression, the painter crystallizes a mood which is too trivial for permanence, that his art loses in dignity by exalting the momentary above the more lasting elements. Such feats, however, secure an amazing effect of lifelikeness. The expression fairly vibrates on the countenance, never hardening into setness.

Scarcely too much can be said of the vitality of Sargent's portraits. To enter a gallery of his works is like entering the town hall at Haarlem among the great portrait groups of

Frans Hals. We come into a room full of living, breathing, human beings. Wherever we go their eyes follow us, smiling, serious, or intent, and as we approach them, they seem to speak to us. And when we come close to the canvas, and find that these creatures of flesh and blood are composed of broad streaks of paint, we feel that we are witnessing a creative process which is not short of a miracle.

Though deriving much from foreign study and foreign residence, our American painters are tending more and more to build up the art of portraiture in our own country. William M. Chase of New York is the dean of American portrait painters, the honoured teacher of many of the younger men. In technical mastery and in real distinction many of his works deserve highest praise. J. W. Alexander and J. J. Shannon are most successful in a style of portrait work which, for lack of a better term, is called pictorial. The decorative composition is their *raison d'être.* A certain sameness of type, and that of a very ideal character, makes the pictures less convincing as likenesses. In

Philadelphia Miss Cecilia Beaux carries on her professional life with a force and virility which place her among the leading portrait painters of the day. Time would fail to enumerate explicitly the names of the groups in Boston and New York who are raising the art of portrait painting to a higher level. The annual exhibitions show a growing interest in this line of work, and here without doubt is one of the most promising fields for the future of American art.

THE END.

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